# WESLEY STUDIES

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# WESLEY STUDIES.

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WITH EXAMPLES OF UNPUBLISHED LETTERS, DIARIES AND JOURNALS

JUNE 17, 1703
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# JOHN WESLEY

1703-1903

TWO hundred Junes have dawned since he whose name
We hold in honour first beheld the light,
Himself, God-sent, through England's darkest night
To spread the Light Divine. With heart aflame,
As if he too had heard his Lord proclaim
In Galilee His last, great Word of Might,
Apostle of his Age, he strove for right
And truth, with dauntless faith and purest aim.

The task he left is ours to-day; supreme
And glad inheritance of us who bear
The standard that he raised. Like him, we dare
To claim a world-wide mission, nor can deem
Our toil complete until, the strife o'erpast,
The waiting world for Christ is won at last!

MARY FARRAH

# PREFACE

AT the Centenary of Wesley's death the Methodist Recorder published in an illustrated number a series of articles. Revised and enlarged, the number was republished by the Wesleyan Methodist Book Room under the general title of "The Homes, Haunts and Friends of John Wesley."

A similar course has been pursued in honour of the Bi-centenary of Wesley's birth, with one important modification: the articles republished in this volume comprise a selection of those which appeared in the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine for June, 1903, and those contributed to the Bi-centenary Number of the "Methodist Recorder."

With few exceptions the original letters and other documents now published have not hitherto appeared in print. In some instances letters finding a place many years ago in the "Wesleyan Times" and republished by Tyerman, confessedly at second hand, are now given, for the first time, in their complete and unedited form.

We are under obligation to the writers who have so cheerfully placed special knowledge at the disposal of the

Methodist people. They have thus assisted the worthy and intelligent celebration of an event now recognised as of world-wide interest.

The generosity of Mr. R. Thursfield Smith of Whitchurch, Mr. George Stampe of Grimsby, and other friends who have permitted the use of valuable manuscripts and portraits is gratefully acknowledged.

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# WESLEY STUDIES.

## The Calibre of Wesley.

HENRY DRUMMOND thus gives his estimate of Wesley's intellect: "It matters not if they are men of burning zeal like Xavier or Whitefield, men of calm spirit like Tersteegen and à Kempis, men of learning like Augustine, or of ordinary gifts like Wesley—the effect of all saintly lives upon the world is the same, they are to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness." ("The Ideal Life," p. 100.)

Now, was Wesley a man "of ordinary gifts?" Drummond is right in reckoning the saintly life of primal importance; none of us will care to dispute this. The personal moral character of great religious and ethical reformers is ever a question of surpassing interest: however intellectually brilliant, they are practically discredited if found obviously lacking in the high qualities they preach. The moral character is the first requirement. And in passing we may notice that the high spiritual and ethical character of a distinguished man tends to obscure his intellectual reputation. That is true in regard to our Lord Himself. We rarely refer to His intellectual eminence, although when we look away from the splendour of His holiness we are filled with admiration at the penetration of His intellectual insight, the richness of His genius, the acuteness of His logic, the eloquence of His expression, and the wondrous beauty of the literary setting of His spiritual doctrine. The personal figure is so sublime that the

exquisite quality of the pedestal is unnoted; the rich colours of the masterpiece are so absorbing, the heavenly gleam of the jewel so dazzling, that the rare merits of frame and matrix are overlooked. As with the Master so it has often been with His servants—the moral lustre has thrown into shade mental excellence of even the highest order.

That it pleases God sometimes to use "ordinary gifts" to extraordinary issues is a position we have no inclination to dispute. Barnabas "was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord." We are free to believe that the intellectual character of many of the disciples who rendered precious service in the primitive Church was distinctly inferior to that of Paul and Apollos. George Fox, who founded such a strong, fruitful, and enduring spiritual society, received only the education of a labouring man; he held that Latin, Greek, and Hebrew were useless to a Christian minister; and his own language was often crude and nearly unintelligible. With all his brilliant gifts of oratory, George Whitefield possessed none of those faculties for thought, logic, organisation, and government which make scholars, philosophers, and statesmen. In men like Barnabas, Fox, and Whitefield the spiritual power appears as the sole factor of their efficacy, and in some ways that power impresses us all the more being dissociated from genius and culture.

But the fact remains that the great spiritual reformers usually possessed splendid natural and acquired talents, and that they freely availed themselves of the resources of scholarship. We do not think of our Lord as of Plato and Socrates, but for pure mental vision and exquisite perfection of language He ranks above the world's greatest intellectual masters. The majority of the primitive disciples were ordinary souls, but God's chosen vessel for the definition of the Christian faith and the organisation of the Christian Church was St. Paul, a scholar of transcendent intellectual faculty. The great leaders of the Catholic Church, men who made a profound and enduring imprint on its creed and discipline, like Augustine, Athanasius, Francis, Bernard, Benedict, and Loyola, were richly gifted natures, and would have shone in any sphere. Unfriendly writers have done their best to depreciate the intellectual status of Luther, but critics of supreme

eminence, without a tinge of theological partiality, have recognised in him one of the greatest intellectual forces of all history.

And Wesley follows in the same order. We may no more speak of him as a man of "ordinary gifts" than we may speak of Luther as thus endowed. Both were of masculine understanding, independent thinkers, formidable logicians and controversialists; they were alike scholars and linguists, masterly scribes and orators, poets and musicians; both had the Shakesperian richness and manifoldness of sympathy and facility, and each of them displayed that courage in putting speculation to the test of the actual state of things and the facts of human life and experience which is ever an indisputable sign of supreme intellectual merit.

He who "hangeth the earth upon nothing" on occasion brings about great results by frail brains, but the miraculous is not the normal order, and He who rules alike in the mental and moral realm provides adequately endowed agents for world-crises. Even in cases where natural talents and training are conspicuously lacking in religious reformers, compensations are at hand to complete the work of a naked spiritual enthusiasm. As Macaulay points out, Robert Barclay was a man of considerable parts and learning, whilst William Penn also was a scholar, and these converts to whom George Fox was scholastically so markedly inferior gave lucidity to their master's teachings and permanence to his movement. And all perceive how immensely that intellectual penetration and grip which are revealed in Wesley's writings and legislation conserved the fruits and influences of Whitefield's flaming industry.

Let us make no mistake; this world is not greatly moved and permanently determined by men of "ordinary gifts"; and whenever it seems to be agitated and shaped by the commonplace we may be sure that simple aspects mask extraordinary ability and resource. It is altogether unphilosophical to believe that profound revolutions are effected by slender wit and shallow enthusiasm, and what is really unphilosophical is also irreligious. When we read that "not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God chose the foolish things of the world, that He might put to shame them that are wise; and God chose the weak things of the world, that He might put to shame the things that are strong: and

the base things of the world, and the things that are despised, God chose, yea and the things that are not, that He might bring to nought the things that are: that no flesh should glory before God," we are not to infer that He employs imbecility in high service, but that He sets at nought ancestral, conventional, artificial greatness in favour of that greatness of the soul which is often found in men of lowly birth and station. Ordinary gifts have their place, sphere, and recompense, but it is not in God's order to set the one talent to accomplish the task of the ten.

How liable we are in forming an estimate of things to fall into serious error! We mistake the superficial and commonplace for the significant, and the really influential is disregarded. Edward Everett Hale has recently published a most interesting work, entitled, "Memories of a Hundred Years," in which he takes occasion to show how the truly great men and things in American life a century ago were ignored and misunderstood, whilst men and matters of the most trivial order filled the public eye and were reckoned of chief importance. After recalling the names of several notorious politicians of the early period, he remarks: "It is such men as they who fill the newspapers of the day; yes, and the private letters of the day. All the same, such men did not make the America of 1812 or of 1850 from the America of 1799." He contends that the real founders of America were not these popular, political rhetoricians with whom history was so largely occupied, but specially two men hardly noticed by their contemporaries—Eli Whitney, the inventor of the cotton-gin, and Robert Fulton, who built the first steamboat. Whitney called upon Thomas Jefferson, who was Secretary of State under Washington, and left with him the papers giving particulars of the new machine, yet Jefferson scarcely alludes to the inventor in his after life, and does not seem to have known that Whitney played a much more important part in the development of the fortunes of his country than he did himself. And Mr. Hale remarks: "You may read through the diaries of the party leaders for twenty years and you will find hardly an allusion, in the writings of the politicians, either to the invention of the cotton-gin, or the invention of the steamboat," and yet these obscure men with their untrumpeted practical inventions were laying the foundations of national wealth and greatness, whilst

the eloquent politicians were vapouring. All of which is clear to-day. The venerable author may well add: "Remember this, O young graduates of 1902. Remember that States are made by makers. Remember that the Leaders lead. Remember that it is not the gift of tongues which makes the Leader. Remember that the men who can, can. Such men are. And such men do."

A hundred-and-fifty years ago, John Wesley was estimated as a cleric of ordinary ability engaged upon a rather squalid task, and as one who compared poorly indeed with the brilliant constellation of philosophers and orators which was then the cynosure of all eyes; but who does not see now that he was an extraordinary personality, greater than any of his contemporaries, separated from his mother's womb to effect a profound spiritual regeneration of the community, a work lying at the very source of civilisation, and which must powerfully affect the race through ages! Surely Drummond was strangely lacking in the sense of historical truth and perspective when he wrote Wesley down as one of "ordinary gifts."

"The Leaders lead. It is not the gift of tongues which makes the Leader. The men who can, can. Such men are. Such men do." Let us add, such men lead, can, are, and do, by virtue of the magnificent faculty bestowed by God on the very few. The supremely great are seers, they discern the fundamental truths and laws of the spheres in which they act; they are not imposed upon by falsities, however much these may be sanctioned and consecrated by authority and antiquity; they see with open vision the fact and principle, whilst all other men are blinded by tradition, ignorance, and interest. They are the pioneers who open the eyes of their own and coming generations to new, larger, brighter horizons, as their own eyes are open.

> "Then felt I like some watcher of the skies,
> When a new planet swims into his ken;
> Or like stout Cortez when, with eagle eyes,
> He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
> Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—
> Silent, upon a peak in Darien."

The supremely great have the power and courage to break away from the errors and superstitions of their age, and of many ages,

and at any cost and sacrifice they strive to give practical effect to the truths they discover. They are not men of words but of deeds. They are critical and destructive only as they are positive and constructive. They are original, initiative, heroic, world-transforming thinkers. And Wesley was one of this rare type. Newton established a great and fruitful principle in science, Bacon in philosophy, Harvey in biology, Adam Smith in political economy, and George Stephenson in mechanics, and thus profoundly changed the methods of men to their infinite advantage; Wesley was of the same royal lineage, for, discerning and enforcing forgotten truths of the highest sphere, he became the instrument of accomplishing a vast and benign regeneration in the hearts and lives of millions, and changed for the better the face of the world. The famous men just mentioned were singularly simple and modest in spirit and style of living, but, for all that, they were not men of ordinary gifts.

The really supremely great stand the test of time. Many who startle and stir the world swiftly pass into oblivion. Instances of this decline and extinction abound in all spheres—art, literature, poetry, politics. Other men grow in the world's thought and admiration as the centuries grow. Says the scientist: "Persistence is the sign of reality," and the few names which gather splendour with the ages are names of special servants of God who possessed superlative gifts, and who were predestined leaders of the race. It is no valid objection to say that these thinkers and workers were unconscious of the greatness of what they did; if they were unconscious it does not negative their intrinsic greatness; and, perhaps, they were not so entirely unconscious of the great part they acted as we suppose. Shakespeare seemed so unconscious of his genius that he neglected to print several of his greatest plays, and yet left for himself that epitaph which betrays the consciousness of enduring fame; and we can sometimes distinctly discern that Wesley had glimpses of the greatness and premonitions of the perpetuity of the work he had in hand, and for which God had raised him up. Even if he built better than he knew, it was only because his gifts and calling were better than he knew. And Wesley must be judged by the later effects of his action, and not by its humble beginnings. Just as we estimate the acorn by the noble forest it yields, so we

judge the intrinsic greatness of a man's intellect and heart not by his first feeble essays to establish his speculations, but by the later evolutions of the principles, creations, and institutions for which he contended. There is a true sense in which the estimate of Columbus grows as America grows, in which Newton's reputation grows as astronomy widens the sky. Only profound souls can seize vast and cosmic truths which the ages work out with ever increasing wonder and delight.

It may seem to some that Wesley's calibre is a matter of considerable indifference, but the race has a peculiar and inspiring inheritance in its great men, and to suffer any one of them to be belittled is to make us all poorer. John Wesley had a burning zeal like Xavier, a calm spirit like à Kempis, learning like Augustine, with other extraordinary gifts peculiar to himself, and we glorify God in him.

W. L. Watkinson.

# Wesley's Home.

O ENGLISH homes of love and peace,
Sequestered from the great world's fret,
Truth-centred, pure, inviolate,
God grant you may not from us cease!

In village lanes, on hill and wold,
Or planted by the wild sea-shore,
Or sunk amid the city's roar,—
May England prize you more than gold.

We turn, and through the distant haze
That old-world home is brought to view,
And somewhat grey appears the hue,
And somewhat stern its formal ways.

Our many-coloured life runs fast,
In novel freedom, brilliant change,—
The passing rare—the passing strange:
We scarce can brook the sober Past.

Yet, mark how firm the hand and kind
That rules the home of Wesley's youth—
The discipline in love and truth,
The patient training of the mind!

How pure and sweet the moral air—
As free from taint as wind that fills
The hollows of the Alpine hills,
And sweet as spring that nestles there:

Where prayer becomes a holy font—
  Prepares the morn, the day concludes;
  Where nothing base or gross intrudes;
Where duty is the use and wont;

Where work and order still agree,
  And leave no selvedge hours for waste;
  For Time is life, and flows with haste,—
Thy tribute stream, Eternity!

In that calm home, these simple ways,
  While service filled the hours assigned,
  The lad was nurtured, heart and mind:
Yet were there great memorial days;

For often by the inner eye
  The flaming house was seen again,
  The white form at the window-pane—
The living ladder reared on high—

The hands that saved! Nay, God's right hand,
  That rules the storm, the ocean wild,
  Reached down that night to one small child,
And from the burning plucked "the brand!"

But other powers, of hate and hell,
  Raged round the Epworth homestead—broke
  The spell of earth—the sense awoke
Of all the dread Invisible.

So went the youth his heedful way
  'Twixt two eternities, as yet
  In twilight, but with aspect set
Towards the brightness of God's day;

His intellect a spear—the glow
  Of love within his soul, a flame
  That, fanned by truth and grace, became
The mighty passion that we know.

—Alfred H. Vine.

# Birth and Early Training.

AN unpublished sermon in the beautiful handwriting of John Wesley was discovered some months ago in one of those little manuscript books which contain the record of the religious exercises and studies, the joys and sorrows and friendships, of the Father of Methodism during his residence at Oxford. The text of the sermon is taken from St. Peter's address in the house of Cornelius—"Who went about doing good." The following is the opening sentence:—"These words give us a short account of our Saviour's life on earth. It was spent in doing good. They also teach us after what manner we His disciples ought to live in this world, namely, that we should omit no opportunity of doing good according as we are able." It must be remembered that this comparatively juvenile sermon was composed at the time when Wesley's spiritual life was under the influence of the "Imitation of Christ," the "Holy Living and Dying," and Law's "Christian Perfection." The ideals inspiring him were created by these immortal books and by the theological teaching of his mother.

Little did the young preacher imagine how literally he was destined in after life to imitate Jesus Christ, to share that great anointing of the Holy Ghost and power which should enable him, after the manner of his Lord, to go about doing good, healing all who were oppressed with the devil, fulfilling a ministry received of the Lord Jesus, until in death his last cry should be the echo of St. Peter's testimony to the Roman centurion, "For God was with him,"—"The best of all is, God is with us."

No true estimate can be given of Wesley that does not begin at the fountain-head of all that was good and great in his life. He was called of God. The prophecies went before on him. In some mysterious sense, never yet fully understood, he was sanctified from his

mother's womb. Baptized for the dead, a brand plucked from the burning, he was the bond-servant of the Lord Christ, was girded by Divine hands for a Divine mission, and led about through a wilderness of temptations until he came into full view of the Cross and lost himself in Christ Jesus, and became so completely one with Him that he also could say, "For me to live is Christ."

No one who has penetrated below the surface of Wesley's life-history can ever be tempted to indulge in hero-worship. Always the solemn voice of Paul the Apostle is heard, "Now unto the King eternal, incorruptible, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever, Amen."

In the old thatched Rectory at Epworth, on the 17th day of June, in 1703, Susanna Wesley gave birth to her fifteenth child. The register of his birth and baptism was destroyed six years later in the fire that consumed the rectory. From a certificate, however, given by the father to the Bishop of Oxford when John was ordained deacon in 1725, and repeated three years later when he was ordained priest by the same Bishop, we learn the date of his birth, and also the significant fact that he was baptized by his father a few hours after he was born. He never forgot the extreme delicacy of his childhood and early manhood. He referred to it on birthdays. In a pathetic letter to his mother, written during his student days, he speaks of himself as "little and weak." It is a very sacred letter, belonging only to his mother, and proving that she in a peculiar and lofty sense was to her young son a minister of Jesus Christ, with the mystic power of binding and loosing.

Two names were given to the child—tradition says at the earnest request of the mother—"John Benjamin." He was the only one of nineteen children who enjoyed the doubtful privilege of two Christian names. Whence came the names? Why were they selected? Why was the mother so anxious that both should be given? It is proper here to recall the fact that Samuel Wesley, by long descent, was a member of a distinguished family, and without doubt the near relative of the Duke of Wellington; also that he married the great grand-niece of the Earl of Anglesey. On both sides of the house John Wesley came of gentle blood, a fact that accounts for not a little

in his life. In the twin stories of the Wesley family we quickly discover the reason of the two names. One belonged to the father's side of the house, the other to the mother's. Once before an attempt had been made to preserve these two names. In the last year of the seventeenth century a child was born whom the rector and his wife named John. In the first year of the new century came another son whom they named Benjamin. The boys both died in their infancy. When, three years later, another son was born, the two last names were restored to the family; the child was "baptized for the dead." Nor was this the only instance in which the duplication of names occurred. The mother's name, Susanna, given to the firstborn daughter, was lost through her death, and restored as soon as another girl was born. We naturally ask, Why was the name John dear to the Wesleys? If we go back one generation in the family history, we learn that Samuel Wesley, of Epworth, was the son of John Wesley, of Winterbourne, who married the daughter of John White, the Puritan "Patriarch of Dorchester." I cannot discover that the name Benjamin occurs anywhere in the lineage of the Wesleys, but it does occur in the equally illustrious family of the Annesleys. The second name was never used after the child's baptism. Even his father does not quote it in the certificate given to the Bishop of Oxford. Nor was the name John, in that form, ever used by father, mother, sisters, or brothers. In all the voluminous correspondence of the Wesley family I do not recall a single instance in which the name "John" appears inside any letter, though, of course, it does appear outside in the address. Far on into manhood he was always called "dear Jack" or "Jacky." His father, in one of the most important letters he ever wrote, simply addressed him as "Son."

Amongst the great portraits adorning the walls of the Rev. Charles H. Kelly's room at City Road are three of surpassing beauty. One by Russell gives the fine aristocratic features and long, delicate hands of Charles Wesley, the poet of the Evangelical Revival, in his early manhood; a second presents the features of the loveliest woman I have ever seen portrayed by any artist. It is the face of Susanna Wesley in her young motherhood. Between these two pictures there looks out the striking face of John Wesley, of Winterbourne, our John's grandfather.

John Wesley, of Winterbourne, was the son of Bartholomew, a Dorchester clergyman belonging to a county family, who at the Restoration suffered for conscience sake. In the time of the Commonwealth Bartholomew's son John became a student in the New Inn Hall, the College that gives a name to the Wesleyan Chapel, Oxford, to-day. Among his University teachers were Thomas Goodwin, Stephen Charnock, and John Howe. The Vice-Chancellor was the famous John Owen, Chaplain to Oliver Cromwell. At Oxford this young John Wesley, like his grandson long afterwards, was noted for seriousness, diligence, and scholarship. He, too, like his father, had to suffer for conscience sake. He became an itinerant preacher among the Puritans, marrying the daughter of one of their most illustrious men. Like his grandson, he desired to become a missionary to America, and was, in a word, a Methodist preacher more than half a century before Methodism was born. It was the memory of this saintly man, whose word, to use one of the Wesley favourite expressions, was "as a hammer and fire," that suggested the name "John" to Samuel and Susanna at the baptism of their second surviving son. In a very great sense the child was "baptized for the dead." He survived, perhaps, more perils threatening his life than any man figuring largely in history. His was, we are sometimes tempted to think, a charmed life. He lived to take up the work his grandfather had left, preaching Jesus Christ and Scriptural holiness throughout the land.

We can picture the family circle into which this child was born. The father and mother we know with singular intimacy. Their first-born, Samuel, at the birth of his brother, was a boy of thirteen. Carefully prepared by his scholarly mother at home, as indeed were all the children, he went, in 1704, to the school in Dean's Yard, under the shadow of Westminster Abbey, at which, many years afterwards, his youngest brother Charles was also educated, and in which he himself became tutor. At the gateway of the old school I stood last February listening to the Methodists singing Charles Wesley's hymns in front of the plot of land on which the Central Methodist Hall is to be built.

Emilia, the eldest surviving daughter, was a girl of twelve in 1703. She lived to her eightieth year and was well known to the early

Methodists of the London societies, for she occupied the rooms adjoining and opening into West Street Chapel, the chapel near Great Queen Street, and not far from the new Kingsway. Under my care are a large number of letters written by Samuel and Emilia Wesley. They are of supreme interest and value. By far the greater number were written to John when he was a student at Oxford or in the early years after his return from Georgia. They give some idea of the extent to which he was indebted for the moulding of character to his brother and sister. They shared with John and Charles that love of learning, of music, of poetry, and of gentle manners which wielded so powerful an influence in the making of Methodism.

Susanna was a child eight years of age at the birth of her brother. Long years afterwards, when John was an old man, he wrote a letter to William Pitt—the great Prime Minister—which has become historic. The copy of this letter, endorsed by John Wesley himself, I have. The occasion of the letter was an acknowledgment of the Prime Minister's kindness in giving an appointment to Susanna Ellison's son, Thomas, and an attempt to interest him in the pensioning of Lieut. Webb. But the letter is a political manifesto conceived in the loftiest spirit of Christian national morality. It is to this sister, Susanna, that we are indebted, in the first instance, for the story of the Epworth ghost. She wrote it in a letter to her brother Samuel at Westminster. To her Mrs. Wesley, after the fire that scattered the rectory children, wrote the long letter on the chief articles of the Christian faith—a letter filling not less than thirty-four pages of Adam Clarke's "Wesley Family." It is one of the most extraordinary letters ever written by a mother—extraordinary for depth of spirituality, for beauty of language, and especially for the breadth of theological learning it displays. I may be pardoned for taking a peculiar interest in this second surviving daughter, inasmuch as her family and my mother's intermarried.

There were three younger children also in the rectory—Mary, accidentally deformed in babyhood, but otherwise singularly beautiful, and as her clever sister Hetty declared, "one of the most exalted of human characters"; Hetty, handsome, witty, brilliant, whose sorrowful story lay like a nightmare upon the family for many years; and Anne, rather more than a year old.

All these five sisters were living, with their mother, in the old rectory at Epworth when John was born. Later the family circle received three notable additions—Martha, afterwards one of Dr. Johnson's personal friends, who lived with her brother John in the Foundery, and was buried in his grave behind the chapel; Charles, the poet of Methodism; and Kezia, born immediately after the fire.

I have dwelt on these family details for a special reason. It is necessary to realise the fact that in his earliest years little Jack Wesley lived in a country rectory filled with young girls, all of them clever, poetical, musical, educated by a mother whose ideals were of the loftiest, and, if tradition speaks truly, the most beautiful and charming girls on the country side. The father was frequently from home, once in Lincoln Castle for debt, many times for months together in London attending Convocation. The child, therefore, was brought up, not in a mixed family of boys and girls, or by father and mother, but almost exclusively under the influence of women and young girls, until, in 1714, he went to the Charterhouse School, where the influence suddenly became exclusively that of men and boys. For eleven years, therefore, the child companied with his mother and sisters, all of them, then or afterwards, remarkable women; for five years the influence, though still intellectual in the highest degree, was in other respects wholly different. Masters taught him, boys living a life of Spartan severity were his daily comrades. The two opposite influences told undoubtedly upon his personal character. The first gave him gentleness, refinement, tenderness, sympathy, and the exquisite taste for which he became renowned: the latter added strength, courage, indomitable endurance.

It is said that the earliest impressions are the deepest and the last to be lost. If this is so, and few will doubt it, we must count the mother and her daughters among the chief of those who laid the foundations of Wesley's character. When, many years later, he wrote his famous "Twelve Rules of a Helper," one of them was to the following effect:—"Speak sparingly with women, especially with young women."

I am bound to admit that Wesley himself was not a shining example of severe adherence to his own rule. He spoke much with women, and often with young women. But it must be remembered

that they all, without exception, were remarkable for intellectual capacity and high moral and religious tone. His friendships were not vulgar flirtations, but serious experiences in a life which, though full of simple gaiety, was always purposeful. His correspondence with his mother and sisters explains and justifies his lifelong habit of friendly communion with good women. Miss Kirkham, daughter of the rector of Stanton (for whom when at Oxford he so often preached) was the sister of the first convert of the Holy Club. She was a lady of the finest personal character. I have a persuasion that if the lost correspondence with this young gentlewoman could be recovered we should find in it one of the well-springs of that great, broad river of Methodism that has made glad the City of our God. That he was not allowed to marry Miss Kirkham was a deep grief of heart to the young clergyman, but had he done so there could have been no Methodism. His friendship with Mrs. Granville and her daughters—ladies of the highest distinction, two of whom afterwards, during the reign of George the Third, figured honourably at Court—was at once religious and intellectual. It led to the cultivation of a habit which told mightily upon the fortunes of Methodism, and indirectly upon the advancement of that education of the people always so dear to Wesley. For these ladies he carefully condensed good books, and prepared little manuals of devotion. His work for them was, in point of fact, the beginning of the Christian Library, and of all that career of religious and literary publication for which this country and the colonies are so deeply indebted to Wesley. It has been assumed that his friendship in Georgia with the niece of the Chief Magistrate of Savannah was wholly different in character. Manuscripts of the highest value which during the last few weeks have come to light, and have passed through my hands, prove how mistaken has been this interpretation of a remarkable episode in the early life of the Father of Methodism.

In studying all this aspect of Wesley's life we cannot fail to see that, under God, he was indebted to his mother and his sisters in large measure for the unblemished name with which he passed through the tempting circumstances and seductions inseparable from the life of a brilliant and highly attractive young man. He and his mother and sisters loved one another with a passionate devotion that never

faltered; not even when family "jars" and the dissonance incident to straitened circumstances broke the harmony for a passing day. The atmosphere of such love made for purity. It taught—

> "High thought, and amiable words,
> And courtliness, and a desire of fame,
> And love of truth, and all that makes a man."

I would even go further and suggest that his friendship in early life with mother, sisters, and good women—for all his friends were intellectual and gifted with religious susceptibilities—was in very deed a "subtle master under heaven," tending to "keep down the base" and to foster all that was best and most sympathetic in this man of men. Nor must we forget that he owed much to that high principled and self-sacrificing elder brother, Samuel, who is so imperfectly understood.

Methodism in its most typical form is remarkable for the homeliness of its fellowship. Once there came to Jesus Christ those who said, "Thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee." He looked round upon those who were with Him, and said, "Behold my mother and my brethren. For whosoever shall do the will of God the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." Just so far as the Methodist Societies reflect the spirit of that great saying do they fulfil the lofty ideal presented in the life of Wesley and of the Early Methodists.

It was quite a humble home into which the child was born—an old thatched house, more farmhouse than rectory, with simple furnishings and not over much space for so large a family. The market town of Epworth was little more than a village. With few exceptions the neighbours were rude, unlettered, and in morals unfitted to associate with the children of such parents. The daily round and common task were overshadowed always by the Rector's books and studies, and still more by brooding care and repeated misfortunes. In Emilia's letters there are pathetic glimpses of insufficient food and scanty raiment. Measured by the standard of our own times, the family income, though not large, could scarcely be called slender, especially when administered by so capable a woman as Mrs. Wesley. But when children come in rapid succession until the quiver is overfilled, and times of sickness are frequent, and death steps in once

and again, we know how expense accumulates and money disappears. It is not necessary to resort, as some have done, to the theory that the Rector confused his affairs by indiscreet management. We have only to remember that when a scholarly clergyman, hoping to relieve the pressure of financial embarrassment, takes upon himself the duty of farming his glebe, he is likely enough to make lamentable mistakes. Add to this the fact that Samuel Wesley was a sturdy politician espousing an unpopular side, and one has little difficulty in realising the exasperation of neighbours and the consequent unfriendliness of markets. The daily struggle of life created an atmosphere which produced its own indelible impression upon John Wesley.

The child's father, with whatever faults, was a man whose memory we revere. We may think that his absorption in literary pursuits and in the duties of Convocation was ill-advised. But then, he was essentially a scholar. He had a lofty conception of duty; he hoped, by means of his glebe-farming, to relieve the necessities of his family and pay his debts. Probably, also, he was better fitted for the life he actually led than for that more domestic career which some would have prescribed. His sons, I venture to think, understood him better than did his daughters, possibly even than his wife. I arrive at this conclusion after comparing the letters of his eldest son with those of his eldest daughter Emilia. I cannot, however, lose sight of the fact that when her brother Annesley found fault with Samuel Wesley's management of his affairs, Mrs. Wesley wrote a prodigious letter, in her own loftiest style of English composition, in defence of her husband. It was copied, probably by Emilia, and a photograph of it is now in my possession.

John Wesley was indebted to his father not only for the self-sacrificing and laborious care with which he struggled to meet the charges of his son's education at the University, but also in relation to at least three critical events in his early life—his ordination, his election to the Fellowship at Lincoln College, and the founding and control of the Holy Club.

(1) At first the father hesitated to advise his son's ordination. His conception of the sacred ministry was the loftiest imaginable. He could not brook the thought that the son of so many prayers should by any possibility enter "the priest's office for a morsel of

bread." Even after his scruples were set at rest, he did not cease his anxiety with reference to his son's doctrinal views and definite conceptions of duty. He would have him to be, beyond all possibility of question, a man called of God to be an apostle.

(2) From childhood we have been accustomed to see upon the title page of our Hymn Book the phrase, "Sometime Fellow of Lincoln College." Do the Methodists of this generation understand what that phrase means? It means that in the providence of God, at a critical moment—a moment of overwhelming family peril, when the father was in despair, and the eldest son had exhausted all his resources—there came to John Wesley the distinguished honour and the ample income of a Fellowship in a great Oxford College. That Fellowship he held until Methodism was rooted in the land. You read the Journal, you follow Wesley as he goes to and fro ceaselessly preaching the Gospel to the poor, you find him assisting his "helpers," the early Methodist preachers—for the most part penniless men—and, at the same time, caring for his own kith and kin. You wonder how he did it? The modest, but for such an economist sufficient income attached to the Lincoln Fellowship answers the question. We are indebted to Lincoln College, first of all, for the financial resources which made the founding of Methodism possible.

But that is the smallest part of the debt of gratitude the Methodists of this generation owe to Lincoln College. Almost immediately after his election, the young Fellow, though only twenty-six years of age, was appointed Greek Lecturer and Moderator of the Classes. It was in the discharge of these offices that he acquired, as he tells us, that power to detect fallacies and to set forth truth which was of such incalculable service to him through all the controversial period when the doctrines of Methodism became clearly defined.

To his father, in the first instance, Wesley was indebted for that famous Fellowship.

(3) In 1729 a crisis occurred in the life of Wesley. The Holy Club sprang into existence, holding its meetings within the vine-covered walls of Lincoln College. Charles Wesley, strictly speaking, was its Founder. Its first member was William Morgan. It was he who first visited prisoners in the gaol at Oxford, and prevailed upon the two brothers to share the then novel labour. John had been

acting as his father's curate at Wroote and Epworth. Dr. Morley, Rector of Lincoln College, induced him to return and take pupils. He did so, and at once joined his brother Charles and William Morgan in their little Society. The Club became the butt of godless wits. Young Morgan fell ill. His father, to whom some malicious person gave a misleading account of the whole affair, wrote complaining that the Wesleys, by the austerities they imposed, and by persuading his son to engage in Quixotic ministries, had impaired his health. Wesley wrote to Mr. Morgan, and gave a full account of the rise of the Holy Club. This famous letter forms the introductory chapter to the Journal. It has become a classic in English literature. It unveils the springs of the great religious movement that has wrought so mightily throughout the world. In that letter Wesley tells us that when perplexity arose he consulted his father. Two extracts from his father's letters he gives. Together they form a monument to the memory of that good man, and help us to understand the extent to which Methodism, and indeed the Church of England, are indebted to his wisdom and prophetic foresight and profound insight.

I might, did space permit, show how through all the critical periods of the young student's life, when his opinions were taking shape and when divers influences playing around him were threatening to divert him from the providential path, his mother interposed. But all the world knows the story of Susanna Wesley's influence in the education and training of her son John and in the making of early Methodism. She, far more than his father, made Wesley the man he was, and piloted the ship through stormy seas.

As in a vision I see the good hand of Him of Whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named guiding, guarding, uplifting, endowing His chosen servant for the accomplishment of a great purpose. The first, and, as it seems to me, the main instrument used by the good hand of God is a godly, highly educated, and severely disciplined family.

More than half a century ago my father wrote a little book for children. He entitled it "The Father of Methodism." Of the new edition prepared as a memorial for the Centenary of Wesley's death, twenty thousand copies were sold. Again, with some slight revision, the book has been issued. I have no interest in it, save that it was

written by my father, and that it recalls my first introduction to the story of Wesley's life. Adam Clarke's "Wesley Family" lying on my father's study table is a familiar memory. The fire, the Epworth Ghost, and the Wednesbury riots introduced me to the fearful joy of romance. But what has ever been my freshest memory connected with Wesley, is the poem my father selected for the chapter headings of his little book.

"Away with our fears!
The glad morning appears
When an heir of salvation was born!
From Jehovah I came,
For his glory I am,
And to Him I with singing return."

It is the story of Wesley's life, and the story of the rise and triumph of Methodism. Its great peculiarity is that although a hymn of intense and rapturous personal experience, it ignores suffering and persecution, the only possible allusion being in the well-known verse so true of all the Wesleys, so true of Methodism—

"O the infinite cares,
And temptations, and snares,
Thy hand hath conducted me through."

The last verse he quoted on his eighty-fifth birthday—

"My remnant of days
I spend in his praise,
Who died the whole world to redeem:
Be they many or few,
My days are his due,
And they all are devoted to him."

N. Curnock.

# Historic Background.

THE figure of John Wesley stands against a dark background—the background of the eighteenth century. In some of its aspects that century is exceptionally interesting and bright. If we could suppress the convictions and emotions of the philanthropist and evangelist, if we could forget questions of morals and religion, if we could fix our attention exclusively on the literary character of the century, we should wander through its years with delight. A man of culture, untouched by "religious enthusiasm," revels in the literature of that day. Mr. Austin Dobson's "Eighteenth Century Vignettes" finds many admirers. We ourselves wander through his picture gallery in that blissful condition of mind in which the ugly facts of life are annihilated. We are in the presence of the wits of the reign of Queen Anne and the early Georges. Addison and Steele, Swift and Fielding look at us from their frames. Johnson and Goldsmith, Reynolds and Burke shine through the clouds of the past. We hear their voices and see the twinkle and flash of their eyes. To the lover of crystalline English, clean-cut and brilliant, the literary men of the eighteenth century are "great spoil." Nor is the interest of that century confined to England and its literature. If we turn to the Continent of Europe, how the years quiver with excitement. Who can watch unmoved the intellectual battle that preceded, and in great measure produced, the French Revolution? Accepting Mr. John Morley as our guide, we emancipate ourselves from the thralls of ancient prejudice, and take a dispassionate view of Voltaire and Rousseau. We note their influence, and that of the Encyclopædists, upon the mind of France, and witness with indignation and pity the outburst of revolutionary fury that drenched the land with blood. Turning away from the Continent of Europe, we gaze across the

Atlantic, and see the men who are welding scattered colonies into a mighty Republic—a Republic which seems sometimes, in the present day, to hold the fate of the world in its hands. The eighteenth century is brimful of life. Carlyle called it "effete." He must have written that word in a fit of spleen, and in total forgetfulness of the French Revolution.

Dreaming of the literary strength and beauty of the eighteenth century, we are suddenly confronted by—John Wesley. He startles us from our delicious musings and scares away our visions. The light that streams from his compels us to scrutinise the moral and spiritual condition of the nation in which Addison polished his prose, and Pope filed his epigrams into exquisite perfectness. When these literary workmen sat at their desks, or sipped wine at their clubs, what was the state of the people who surrounded them? That is a question upon which they thought little, or, at any rate, to little purpose. It would be unfair to forget that "The Spectator" was written with a moral aim, and continually protested against the scandalous practices of a corrupt society. But its influence was confined to a narrow sphere, and it cannot be numbered among the forces which distinctly and permanently revolutionised the manners of the English people. We must turn away from the literary men of that day, we must leave them in their lettered ease, we must face the problem which is suggested by the advent of John Wesley; we must try to see the facts that confronted him when he beheld the religious indifference, the spiritual deadness, the wild wickedness of England.

The Methodist historian is sometimes accused of painting the picture of the moral and spiritual condition of England in the eighteenth century in too gloomy colours. If the accusation is true, then the error should be avoided. It must be remembered that in many parts of the country the light which was kindled by the Puritan Reformation still shone brightly. In the Established and in the Dissenting Churches there were men and women of deep spirituality and noble Christian character. Samuel Johnson was a man of devout mind. He possessed that saving quality—the capacity to repent. He was profoundly reverent. He held communion with God which was intimate, simple, child-like. Quick eyes can easily detect the flecks and flaws of his character, but all who read his "Life" with

sympathy will agree that, in exceptionally difficult circumstances, he was a man who had a right to bear his Master's name. If we turn to the Dissenters, we see Matthew Henry girt about with the strong, pure, lovely influences of the Broad Oak home—that home where Philip Henry shone with a steady, alluring light before the eyes of his parishioners; we see, also, Philip Doddridge seated among his students a man who illustrated the doctrines he taught by the virtues of an irreproachable life. These are prominent names, but they are typical of many who served God in quiet places with fervent hearts. Nor must we fail to catch the light that gleams from the "Religious Societies" that were scattered over the country. We cannot tell their number but we know that amongst their members were men and women whose piety was incontestable. All lovers of light recognise it wherever it shines. If it greets us in obscure places it is all the more welcome.

Checking the tendency to exaggerate the gravity of the moral and spiritual condition of the country in the eighteenth century, let us look at the question with the "cool spirit" of the "man of understanding." We think that it is impossible to describe the religious state of England at that time correctly if we fail to appreciate the effect of two intellectual movements which profoundly influenced the mind of the nation. It is true that great questions, which fascinate intellectual men and which determine the attitude of the highest minds towards moral and religious truth, sometimes fail to engage the attention of ordinary men and women. The student errs when he supposes that everyone is thinking of the latest book he has read and the last problem that has baffled his skill. The "man in the street" knows and cares nothing about his books and problems. Still, there are some questions which interest the multitude. They are widely discussed, and the discussion affects the public mind. The religious problems that emerged in the eighteenth century were not considered exclusively in the coteries of professional theologians; they became the subjects of conversation among the people of England.

The eighteenth century witnessed the putting forth of the strength of Deism. Those who have studied the history of that remarkable movement of religious thought will have seen that while it made a

direct appeal to those who read, it also fascinated talkers and listeners. When students, speakers, and hearers are caught in the sweep of a great movement, the nation must be impressed. The subjects handled by the Deistic writers with so much audacity and acuteness were precisely those in which all men are interested. The existence of God being granted, has He made known His mind to man in such a way that His communications can be written down in a book which all can read? That question is of perennial interest. It is still being discussed, it will continue to be discussed. Even in the present day, sometimes it seems as if we had only got so far as to acknowledge that there is a God. Lord Kelvin's recent assertion that modern Science believes in the existence of "a creating and directive power," has brought consolation to bewildered minds; but that great scientist is too astute to commit himself on the subject of a written revelation. He entrenches himself within the lines of the carefully phrased words: "We have an unknown object put before us in Science. In thinking of that object we are all agnostics. We only know God in His works." That is a twentieth century statement from the lips of one of the most honoured sons of Science. In the eighteenth century the possibility of knowing God by means of revelation was debated with vehemence. The reasoner keenly appreciates the intellectual conflict that then raged. Irresistible logic, nimble wit, shining rhetoric, biting satire, broad humour, intense passion, all figured in the fight. In book and pulpit, at the street corners, and in still hamlets of the country, men wrangled about revelation until they almost reasoned God out of His own world.

The reckless discussion of the claims of the Bible to be considered a revelation of the mind of God is always perilous. In the eighteenth century it was fatal. The atmosphere of the age was favourable to the growth of doubt. In all ranks of society cynical and hostile sceptics abounded, and the faith of the nation was weakened and well-nigh slain. When the Bible loses its authority, men find it difficult to believe in God. Lord Kelvin's statement that "we only know God in His works" is ill news for most of us. The men who can scientifically study God in His works to-day are few—in the eighteenth century their number was insignificant. Deprived of the guidance which is given by the Scriptures, men turned towards

Nature and found that they did not know her alphabet, that they were incapable of spelling her simplest sentences. The golden ladder that lifts us to heights from which heaven can be seen had been discredited, and men rambled away to find other means of scaling the skies. They called themselves Deists. Deism is a slippery rock in the wild sea of practical atheism. To stand on that rock is possible to some men, but thousands find that the attempt ends in disaster.

The religious discussions of the eighteenth century impaired the intimacy of men with God. He was withdrawn from their daily thoughts. He became a faint light occasionally gleaming in the void of the Infinite. Still, men could not altogether emancipate themselves from the tyranny of old ideas. They were forced to catechise Nature, and to find out if she had any revelation to make concerning the Future. The moral order of the universe was examined, and seemed to suggest the existence of a "directive power." Closing their Bibles, they tried to discover without the aid of revelation whether vice was punished and virtue rewarded in this world, and, more important still, whether punishment and reward were limited to man's life on earth. That problem has exercised and darkened the keenest intellects the ages have known. We can imagine the confusion of mind that followed its public and popular discussion in the eighteenth century. One result was produced which can be clearly seen in the history of that day. A weakened sense of the presence of God was accompanied by a feeble conception of sin, and an almost universal failure to realise the solemnity of Eternity.

It may be urged that we have only sketched a condition of religious thought which is constantly recurring in the history of the race. We feel the force of the suggestion. We know that each age mirrors its predecessor, and that it would be possible to write of the present day in some such terms as we have employed in describing the eighteenth century. But there is an important difference, and its existence leads us to note the second intellectual movement which affected the mind of the English people in the days that preceded the Methodist Reformation. When the fatal paralysis which induces insensibility to God, to sin, to judgment, is creeping over a nation, the progress of the disease may be checked. If the faith of Christian people is flawless, if their vigorous belief in

Christian doctrine drives them into perpetual witness against the irreligion of the nation, if the land is filled with the practical philanthropies which illustrate the meaning of the teaching of the beneficent Saviour—in a word, if Jesus Christ is incarnated in His people and shines and speaks through them in the darkness and the miseries of human life—then the deadly torpor is not only held in arrest but is driven back from the heart. It is precisely at this point that we recognise the difference between our own day and the times of which we write. It is well known that while the Deists were spoiling the religious life of the nation, the Churches were being robbed of their virility by the defection of numerous ministers from their loyalty to Jesus Christ. The blight of Arianism had fallen upon the Presbyterians, and its enfeebling effects were seen beyond their borders. Some years ago we stood in a Unitarian Chapel which had once been the scene of evangelical Christian worship. Scattered about the place were hymn-sheets which had been used in the birthday celebration of Jesus of Nazareth. Amongst the hymns was one familiar to Methodists, but so emasculated, so shorn of its Divine beauty, that it excited the contempt of the critic and the indignation of the Christian. Glancing at a tombstone at our feet, we read the inscription recording the death of the old Presbyterian pastor who once preached in the place. He was described as "A faithful minister of Jesus Christ." The tombstone and the hymn-sheets were waymarks on a strange road; they stirred unutterable feelings in our heart. It was a sad day for England when the Presbyterians, who had borne noble witness for their Lord right down from the days of the Reformation, began to hesitate in their testimony, and then to deny the fact of His deity. It is impossible to estimate the effect produced on the religious life of the country by their lapse from orthodoxy. Let us be thankful that, in these later days, a new Presbyterianism has arisen that lifts up the Cross, and points untremblingly to the Son of God Who sitteth upon the throne for ever and ever.

The defection of the Presbyterians must have told seriously upon the other Dissenting Churches. The disfiguring touch of Arianism can be perceived on the teaching of some of the most prominent nonconforming ministers of that day. But, passing by that deplorable

fact, it is undeniable that in all Churches the spirit of religious aggression slumbered and slept. What is the effect of the teaching which fails to set forth Christ as the King of Glory, as the Lamb of God slain upon the Cross, as the living Master who must be imitated and served even at the cost of life itself, the Master whose heart yearns unsatisfied so long as the world contains one sinner who is unwarned, one penitent who is ignorant of the pardoning love of God?

In the eighteenth century there was a Church in England which was charged with the solemn duty of saving the nation from its sins. It existed, like all other Churches, for that purpose alone. Its honours, its privileges, its endowments, its supreme position in the State, everything it inherited from the past, all it possessed in the present, had to be used for that one object. The frank admissions of Episcopalians respecting the failure of their Church in the eighteenth century prevent us from accentuating the facts which we all deplore. It is only necessary to point out that so long as any Church decries "enthusiasm" it deprives itself of working force. The Church of England still cherishes the theory that in its doctrines, its view of the Christian life, and in its forms of worship, sobriety and commonsense find their highest expression. In the eighteenth century these calm-eyed virtues were not only in the ascendant, they universally prevailed. The political reformer knows that great causes are not initiated by men whose chief characteristic is an icy sobriety. "We must have some fanatics," they say, when they intend to attack well-entrenched evils. We wish that sin could be banished with a gentle hand and a placid mind by unexcited men radiant with the sober light of commonsense. But can this be done? Alas! our prejudices in favour of stately rebukes, administered at a distance, in a soft voice speaking from the seclusion of a pulpit, find little support from life's grim facts. We must take it as certain that the unenthusiastic Church is the inefficient Church. That fact is now generally admitted. The wit who called the "Oxford Movement" Newmania was wiser than he supposed. The great revival that has taken place in the Established Church is the direct outcome of burning enthusiasm.

If we bear the facts which we have indicated in mind, we shall have no difficulty in understanding the descriptions which have been given of the moral and religious condition of the nation in the

eighteenth century. We will not heed the voice of the Methodist historian; we will listen to other witnesses. Let the Bishop of Norwich take the first place. In a sermon which he preached before the House of Lords, in Westminster Abbey, on December 8, 1721, he said: "Wickedness still overflows the nation like a mighty deluge, so as to overspread all ranks and orders of men amongst us. Do not our eyes behold it continually, in open atheism, profaneness, and impiety; in the hypocrisy and dissimulation; in the contempt of God and His holy worship; in the profanation of His holy day; in the bold infidelity, and denying the Lord that bought us; in the dreadful abuse of God's great and glorious Name by the horrid oaths, curses, and imprecations which are heard continually in our streets, and in the places of concourse and conversation; in the practice of the most filthy and abominable lusts; in the lewdness and luxury; in the oppression and injustice; in the implacable malice and hatred of one towards another; and in our senseless divisions and animosities, without cause and without end, which reign everywhere?" Let us honour the man who dared to speak these plain words in their lordships' ears in Westminster Abbey! Now, let us listen to their lordships themselves. A Committee of the House of Lords was appointed about the year 1738 to "examine into the causes of the present notorious immorality and profaneness." In their report the Committee stated that "they had sufficient grounds to believe that a number of loose and disorderly persons had of late formed themselves into a club, under the name of Blasters, and were using means to induce the youth of the kingdom to join them. The members of this impious club professed themselves to be votaries of the devil, offered prayer to him, and drank his health. They also had been heard to utter the most daring and execrable blasphemies against the sacred Name and Majesty of God; and to use such obscene, blasphemous, and before unheard of expressions as the Lords' Committee think they cannot even mention, and therefore they pass them over in silence." The same Committee further reported that "of late years there had appeared a greater neglect of religion and of all things sacred, a greater neglect of Divine worship, both public and private, and of a due observance of the Sabbath, than had ever before been known in England. . . . Idleness, luxury, gambling, and an excessive

use of spirituous and intoxicating liquors had grown into an alarming magnitude."

These extracts must suffice. They cast a light upon the condition of this country on the eve of the Evangelical Revival. The words used are not those of a hysterical fanatic; they are the well-weighed terms selected by a dignitary of the Church, and by peers of the realm of England. The recommendations of the Committee were accepted by the House of Lords, and such acceptance warrants us in saying that the truth of the accusations was admitted. The documents in which these descriptions occur are of living interest. They should be studied by every Christian man in the country, for they were written for our instruction, that we may learn the inevitable results of a dishonoured Bible and a dethroned Christ.

Against the sombre background of the eighteenth century stands the slight figure of John Wesley armed with an omnipotent force. The little "Field" Bible which is handed on from President to President is one of the most significant books existing in England to-day. With that volume in his hand, Wesley went out to the nation. The lightnings of a hostile criticism shone about it. He knew what the Deists had said and written, but he was equipped with the results of knowledge and experience, and the "lambent flames" around him "played." A sentence that he wrote represents his spirit and attitude. "Here I stand with my Bible!" It was his court of ultimate appeal; it was the weapon that made him invincible in his attack upon "evil of every kind." When he sat quiet in his house the Book was his companion; when he laid him down to sleep the reconciling Word sweetly composed his weary breast; when he rose in the morning, and went out to his work, the "precious Word" flowed from his heart and filled his tongue. He was a Bible enthusiast, and his enthusiasm kindled anew the lamp of faith in revelation that was going out not only in the world, but in the Temple of the Lord.

But Wesley did more than resuscitate the nation's expiring faith in the Bible. Through him came to the masses of the English people a consciousness of God which was like a fresh revelation. The living God came close to the heart, the conscience, the imagination, and the life of men. The coming of God brought darkness and light. The new religious experience, which was the result of Wesley's preaching,

like the first day, was made up of evening and morning. Sin, judgment, "the wrath to come," ideas that had grown wan and impotent, suddenly put on terrific strength as the Almighty unveiled Himself. That was an age of poignant conviction. Hearts broke, and sometimes mourning sinners were covered with the clouds of an unrelieved despair.

But the glory of Wesley's work was his testimony concerning Christ. No dismal doubts concerning the Deity of his Lord disturbed his soul. Set free from the calamity of a halting faith, his eyes were ever lifted reverently to the throne. But his experience had led him into an understanding of the meaning of the Cross which caused his heart to burn within him. He had found forgiveness through a direct and simple act of faith in his crucified Lord, and that fact had brought the sunshine of a summer morning into his spirit. Studying the atonement, he saw that Paul had pierced its mystery, and expressed its meaning when he spoke of "the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me." Wherever he went he preached the doctrine of forgiveness, and led myriads of penitents into the light of the conscious favour of God. Then in very deed did God come nigh to men. The doctrine of "the witness of the Spirit" carries with it the fact of the intimacy of God with His reconciled children. He talks to them always because He is always with them. We do not wonder that the nation listened eagerly to the joyful sound. The silver trumpet of the jubilee stirred all hearts, and ransomed sinners walked in the light of the countenance of the Lord.

Faith in the Bible, in God, in the facts of sin and judgment, in Christ, in the possibility of forgiveness, in the witness of God's Holy Spirit! What a shining series of results for any man to effect. But Wesley did more. He restored the faith of men in their own possibilities. When we tell a man that he can live a new, a Divine life, that he may be holy, we express an extraordinary estimate of human nature. But Wesley had no hesitation in declaring that sin could be conquered and destroyed, that God could be so loved as that the passion for Him should become a transfiguring and transforming force, making men to put on once more the Divine image. If we wish to understand the wonder of Wesley's work, let us fill our minds with the cynical reasoning of the Deists against the possibili-

ties of knowing the Divine will concerning human conduct and destiny, and then we take up Wesley's "Plain Account of Christian Perfection." As we read we seem to have stepped out of a dungeon into Paradise.

The doctrine of Christian Perfection as taught by Wesley was full and practical. It had a side which appealed to the mystic; but it also arrested attention by its insistence upon "the love of our neighbour," which the religious dreamer too often overlooks. John Wesley stood forth for God and man, and no one can estimate aright the effect of his widely extending philanthropies. He inaugurated some of the most beneficent charities of the present day; better than that, he brought a new spirit into the world. He made the rich see the miseries of the poor; in his societies class distinctions were levelled, and the doctrine of fraternity was illustrated; he dignified work by his example and his teaching; he dared to be poor; he made cheerfulness a virtue; he brought back the religious joy that had become a lost possession of the people of England. It is no wonder that he shines so radiantly against the dark background of the eighteenth century.

JOHN S. SIMON.

# New Light on Old Facts.

ON Friday, February 9, 1750, Wesley, being then in London, writes: "We had a comfortable watch-night at the chapel. About eleven o'clock it came into my mind, that this was the very day and hour in which, forty years ago, I was taken out of the flames. I stopped, and gave a short account of that wonderful providence. The voice of praise and thanksgiving went up on high, and great was our rejoicing before the Lord."

Wesley was not always accurate in dates or numberings. His errors may usually be traced to the influence of that curious law of association which played so important a part in his mental life. All accounts agree that the date of the fire was February 9, 1709, and the hour between eleven and twelve. It is a curious coincidence that at a still earlier period, on *March* 9, 1737, as we learn from original manuscripts, he recalled his rescue from the flames. There can be no doubt that the event made a profound impression on the child's mind—an impression that he never shook off, or tried to shake off. When, in 1753, believing himself to be a dying man, he wrote his own epitaph, "to prevent vile panegyric," his thoughts again ran back to his childhood and the fire in the old rectory:

HERE LYETH THE BODY

OF

JOHN WESLEY.

**A brand plucked out of the burning.**

The watch-night service in London at which he told the story of the rectory fire was held in a time of public consternation. The day

before three waves of an earthquake, "attended with a hoarse rumbling noise like thunder," had shaken all London and Westminster. So great was the awakening among the people that Wesley's projected journey to Bristol had to be postponed. On the Wednesday following another watch-night was held at the Foundery, "the shortest I had ever known . . . we knew not how the hours stole away, while prayer was lost in praise and thanksgiving." The day following was observed as a solemn fast, with meetings at five, seven, ten, and one; at night the rich came to the Foundery, and heard Wesley cry like another John the Baptist, "Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" God was passing by in earthquake. Little wonder that the preacher recalled the night forty years before when God spoke to a little child out of the fire.

Many years later Wesley printed the story as he found it in a letter written by his mother to a neighbouring clergyman some months after the event. The letter (copied) we now know was in her son's possession when he gave the short account at the earthquake watch-night. A photograph of it lies before me. It is obviously the letter from which Wesley quoted in the statement he printed in 1778. But he has edited it here and there, and has only printed so much as served the purpose he had in view. Henry Moore, who also gives the letter in an incomplete form, copies Wesley's editorial emendations. Yet the original manuscript copy was in his own possession when he wrote, and he might have given the whole without hurt to the reputations he so jealously guarded. I will reproduce the letter without either "dear Jacky's" or Henry Moore's alterations and suppressions.

There are at least two other versions of the story: one, also by Mrs. Wesley, written to her son Samuel, then at Westminster; the other by the rector to the Duke of Buckingham. Both date from within a week of the event they describe. It would not be surprising if other letters written by husband or wife should come to light. Friends wishful to relieve the family's desperate plight would desire to have an account of what had happened, and letters were probably scattered broadcast. On the story as told by his mother, John makes this characteristic observation: "The following letter, written by my mother, gives an account of a very remarkable providence; but it

is imperfect with regard to me. That part none but myself can supply." With this agrees the endorsement, in Wesley's own handwriting, on the letter now before me:

*My Mother's acc^t of y^e Fire*
*Aug.* 9, [*altered to* 24], 1709.
*Not exactly right with regard to me.*
*J. W.*

The following is the letter:

"COPY OF A LETTER BY MRS. WESLEY TO THE REV. MR. HOOLE.

"Epworth, August 24, 1709.

"REV. SIR,—

"My Master is much concerned that he was so unhappy as to miss seeing you at Epworth, and is not a little troubled that the great hurry of business he is in about his building will not afford him leisure to write at present. He has therefore commanded me to make a tender of his humblest thanks and service to yourself and his unknown Benefactors that by your application were moved to so laudable and generous a Charity; and since he is not acquainted here with any good hand that can give you the particulars of our late misfortunes, he has ordered me to satisfy your desire as well as I can, which I shall do by a simple relation of matter of fact; nor can I, at this distance of time, recollect every calamitous circumstance that attended our strange reverse of Fortune.

"On Wednesday night, February the 9th, between the hours of eleven and twelve o'clock, our dwelling-house was fired, by what accident God only knows; which was discovered by some sparks falling from the roof upon a bed where one of the children [Hetty] lay, that burnt her feet: she immediately ran to our chamber, and called us; but I believe none heard, for Mr. Wesley was alarmed by a cry of fire in the street, upon which he arose, not imagining 'twas his own house burning. On opening his door, he found it [the house] full of smoke, and perceived the roof was already burnt through. He immediately came to my room (for I having been very ill, we were obliged to lye asunder), and bid us rise quickly and shift for our lives. The house was all on fire. Then he ran and broke open

the nursery door, and called to the maid to bring out the children. She snatched up the youngest and bid the rest follow, which they did, except Jacky; for he, coming to the entry and seeing the fire, ran back to his bed; nor did we presently miss him. When we were got into the hall and saw ourselves surrounded with flames, and that the roof was upon the point of falling, we concluded ourselves inevitably lost, for in the fright we had forgot the keys of the house, which were in my Master's chamber. But he ventured upstairs once more, and recovered them a minute before the staircase took fire. When we opened the street door, it being a strong north-east wind, the flames poured in with such violence that none could stand against them. Mr. Wesley only had such presence of mind as to think of the garden door, out of which he helped some of our children; and our men broke the bars and the glass of the hall and of the dining-room windows, by which the rest escaped. I was not in a condition to stir like the rest, nor could I climb a window, or get to the garden door; I endeavoured thrice to force a passage through the flames that had seized the street door. I was as often beat back by the fury of the fire. In this distress I made my particular application to our blessed Saviour, and besought Him, if it was His will, to preserve me from death; when I made another attempt and waded through the fire (naked as I was), which did me no further harm than a little scorching of my hands and face, which immediately brought into my mind that passage in Esay xliii. 2: 'When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.'

"While my Master was carrying the children into the garden, we heard the child in the nursery cry out miserably for help, which extremely moved him; but this affliction was much increased when he had several times attempted the stairs, then on fire, and found it was impossible to get near him. He then gave him up for lost, and, kneeling down, commended his soul to God, and left him, as he thought, burning. But the boy, seeing none come to his assistance, and being frightened by the hanging of the chamber and his bed being on fire, climbed up to the casement, where he was presently espied by the men in the yard, who immediately pulled him out, just in that article of time that the roof fell and beat the chamber to the earth. So, by the infinite mercy of Almighty God, our lives were well preserved by little less than

miracle; for there passed but a few moments between the first discovery of the fire and the falling of the house.

"Though Mr. Wesley and I and seven small children were all naked and exposed to the inclemency of the air, in a night which was as severely cold as perhaps any one can remember, and though we had before our eyes the melancholy prospect of our house and goods consuming in the flames, nor knew we whither to wander nor what to do with our little ones that now cried out, as much with the cold and because the frost cut their naked feet, as they had just before done for fear of the fire, yet so deeply were our minds affected with the goodness of God in preserving ourselves and our children's lives, that for a while we made no reflection on the condition to which we were reduced, nor did the consideration of our having no house, money, food, or raiment, for the present, much affect us. We had a good quantity of wheat and malt in the house, and my Master had received a considerable sum of money the day before for flax; but we had no time to save anything, nor could we afterwards recover more than about twenty-five ounces of plate, though perhaps more might be found. I had the week before (as I used to do when in this condition) brought all my pewter, brass, etc., which was most valuable, into my store chamber, and so increased our loss. But the greatest and most irrecoverable loss was my Master's books and manuscripts, particularly those which he had just before prepared for the press, and upon the delivery of which he should have received fifty pounds. We had a little hemp and some corn unthrashed that was preserved, and they got some lumber out of the low rooms; but the worth is very inconsiderable. Thus, Sir, it pleased God by a strange turn of His providence to take from us what before He had most liberally given us; and I can assure you, Sir, whatever some men's philosophy may persuade them to the contrary, such involved and mysterious methods of Divine Providence are hard to bear with temper and submission, as they are to understand; and the calming our tumultuous passions and suppressing these notions of discontent and murmuring that are wont to take their rise from such occurrences are some of those difficult acts of mortification which our Saviour aptly expresses by pulling out a right eye and cutting off a right hand. Yet it hath pleased the Almighty Being hitherto to support us, and to raise some friends whose charity has supplied us with daily bread and some-

thing towards the building of our house; and more, I believe, had been done but that there are a sort of people who find a malicious pleasure in inventing and spreading false reports that our losses are abundantly made up by the liberal contributions of our neighbours. I love not to complain, neither with nor without reason, nor would I be unthankful to God or man. Therefore I gratefully acknowledge we have received very considerable benefactions from several worthy persons; yet, notwithstanding, we are, I fear, far from having a sufficiency to defray the charge of the building, and when that is finished any man of sense may easily conceive that the furnishing a house for so large a family, to say nothing of necessary clothing for ourselves and ten children, and the books which my Master cannot be without, will require full as much as the house itself. Yet, notwithstanding all that the great enemy of mankind can suggest or any person can do against us, if it please God to raise us from the dust as He did Job, He can easily do it; for Omnipotence knows no difficulty, and the Almighty Power from whom we received our being can, if He sees it best for us, quickly restore us to our former condition. But if His infinite wisdom has otherwise determined concerning us, His will be done. All is best that He orders, and His ways are ever equal, and His actions are, in number, weight, and measure, most perfect. I humbly beg the continuance of *your* prayers for us that God would assist and direct us.

"I am,

"Your obliged humble servant,

"S. W.

"P.S.—I gave my Master the eight guineas and fifteen shillings in silver."

Wesley's revised version of his mother's story is well known. Read, however, in connexion with this letter—now for the first time, I believe, printed in full—it assumes a new importance. The influence of the whole episode on John, on his mother, and on the evolution of early Methodism, can scarcely be exaggerated. There is clear documentary proof that Susanna Wesley from that night regarded "Jacky" as a chosen vessel, and she educated him accordingly.

At the point in Mrs. Wesley's narrative where her husband, kneel-

ing down, commended the child's soul to God, John Wesley gently sets his mother on one side, and adds: "I believe it was just at that time I waked; for I did not cry, as they imagined, unless it was afterwards. I remember all the circumstances as distinctly as though it were but yesterday. Seeing the room was very light, I called to the maid to take me up. But none answering, I put my head out of the curtains, and saw streaks of fire on the top of the room. I got up and ran to the door, but could get no farther, all the floor beyond it being in a blaze. I then climbed up on a chest which stood near the window. One in the yard saw me, and proposed running to fetch a ladder. Another answered, 'There will not be time; but I have thought of another expedient: here, I will fix myself against the wall; lift a light man, and set him on my shoulders.' They did so, and he took me out of the window. Just then the whole roof fell in; but it fell inward, or we had all been crushed at once. When they brought me into the house where my father was, he cried out, 'Come, neighbours, let us kneel down! Let us give thanks to God! He has given me all my eight children: let the house go; I am rich enough.'"

How often have we wondered who was the man who lifted John Wesley out of the window of the burning house. The following letters answer the question:

"DEAR SIR,—We received the enclosed this morning and send it on at once that you may make such use of it as you think proper. We sent a cutting of the article on Epworth from the 'Recorder' of April 16 to Mrs. Rowson, because we knew she would have a personal interest in it. You may rely on her statement.—Yours truly,

"GEORGE HOLBREY,
"Wesleyan Minister,
"71, George Street, Retford, June 2."

"DEAR SIR,—I am the wife of the Rev. A. E. Rowson, Methodist Episcopal pastor, of address given below. A few days ago I received from a dear friend in England (my native land) the article on 'The Birthplace of John Wesley,' by Percy Sharp, taken from your issue of

'Recorder' of April 16. The whole of the article was interesting to me, but I specially noted the sentence referring to the rescue of John Wesley from the burning Rectory, which said, 'The names of those two men should have been handed down to posterity, for who can realise the benefit they conferred upon humanity.' I am proud to inform you I am a descendant of the man who stood on the shoulders of another, and took the boy from the window of the burning house. My sainted and honoured father (the late William Kirk, of Retford, Nottinghamshire) was born at a village in the Isle of Axholme, just a few miles from Epworth, and this man, whose name was 'Clark,' was his great-great-grandfather. My dear father died in 1884, but will still be remembered by some readers of your valuable paper, for he held, I believe, all the offices eligible to a layman in connection with the Grove Street Circuit, Retford.—Yours sincerely,

"C. E. Rowson,

"Taylors' Falls, Chicago County, Minnesota, U.S.A.,
May 11, 1903."

The only other treasures rescued from the fire were:

1. Part of a leaf of his polyglot Bible which the rector picked up in his garden the next day, with the words just legible: *Vade: vende omnia quæ habes, et attolle crucem, et sequere me* ("Go; sell all that thou hast, and take up thy cross, and follow Me"). Was little "Jacky" by his side when the message was found, and was this the beginning of the habit he formed—strengthened by the example of the Moravians—of consulting the Bible as an oracle at critical moments when he needed direction as from God Himself? In this matter-of-fact age we may smile at the ancient custom; but no one can read the Georgian Journal, for instance, without feeling that it was all very real to John Wesley, whilst the results were, to say the least, astounding.

2. The other precious salvage from the fire, if we may trust tradition, was a hymn written by the rector and set to music, probably by Purcell or Dr. Blow. It is the majestic hymn, "Behold the Saviour of Mankind!" In its original form it consists of six verses. It is the only specimen in our Hymn-Book of Samuel Wesley's poetic gift.

Among the Wesley manuscript books is a volume much used, bearing on certain pages the thumb-marks of the preacher. It is one of two manuscript hymn-books used by Wesley during his evangelistic tours. The other is at the Book-Room—a volume of great beauty, complete, and in excellent condition. A description of it, with an account of how it came into the possession of the Book-Room and a specimen page in facsimile, will be found in "Homes and Haunts." The Hymn-Book to which I now refer is in the Colman Collection. Though much more worn, and in two places mutilated by a ruthless collector of autographs, it is the more precious, partly because it belongs to an earlier time, and partly because it is also a sermon register. Henry Moore, to whom, as one of Wesley's executors, the volume was left, or his executor, Mr. Gandy, has been at the pains to count up the number of sermons preached during fifteen years, from 1747 to 1761. He has made the following note: "Vol. xxi.—Containing 192 hymns; texts of 7,142 sermons, with the names of the places where preached and dates, between 1747 and 1761, embracing a period of fifteen years, *i.e.*, 10 sermons in each week: 266 texts from the Old Testament; 1,008 from the New, giving an average of 5½ times that each sermon was preached." I may add that, following the inveterate habit of economy which hard experience drilled into him, Wesley utilises all the spare space in the volume. He begins the hymns at one end and the sermon register at the other. The result is that the two overlap.

To this curious volume I turn, and find that John included his father's hymn in the collection he himself used. He only gives the first and second lines in each verse, and writes in an abbreviated long-hand, not difficult to read, especially if, like Wesley, you know the hymn.

The manuscript Hymn-Book—still on favourite pages bearing Wesley's thumb-marks—from which I have quoted is numbered xxi. It is one of a series, differing, however, from its companions, for it is larger and less elegantly bound. The rest are uniform in size and binding. In themselves, and in their contents, they are extremely interesting. They reveal Wesley as he was in early life—methodical, neat, mindful of small points, thrifty even in the use of note-books, intolerant of ugliness. The little volumes are beautiful; so also, as

a rule, is the handwriting. Margins are rarely permitted, and no word is fully spelt if an abbreviation will serve.

From early Oxford days Wesley had in his possession a considerable number of these beautiful little blank volumes. Some, if not all, of them were intended for class use. This seems to account for certain rulings and figures which here and there mingle distractingly with the present writing on the pages. They were not all used, or only partially so, for their originally designed purpose. In some instances blank pages were left, and at a later date were utilised for quite different purposes. The intermingling of the most incongruous materials—personal, scholastic, literary, epistolary—is most interesting, and often suggestive. It suggests a character that has been on the potter's wheel, and has known for long the hand of the Master Craftsman—yes, and the fires of the annealing furnace also. It gives us passing glimpses of a life that has constantly changed, and in which decay has been, on the whole, for the bad rather than for the good. There are not wanting sloughs of the old things that have passed away—sloughs that would teach us much, if only we could read them aright, and were not afraid to face their true values.

This I will illustrate by a concrete case. Here is a series of negative boxes containing the records of the daily life of an Oxford scholar, who, being by this time in Holy Orders, takes duty occasionally for his father and others, and who, being poor and a son of poverty, makes his journeys, even the longest of them, on foot. His religiousness, of which he has a large share, is indicated by questions for self-examination neatly written at the beginning of the volume, the negatives of which lie before me. There are also "Resolutions" that touch conduct and character at many points. He is striving, even thus early, after perfection—striving fitfully, and with many failures. As I lift the negatives one by one to the light and try to decipher the cryptic writing, one thing at least becomes plain. Here is a soul quivering between life and death, between God and the world, between the old things that are reluctantly passing away and that new life in Christ Jesus, the dawn of which is as yet only dimly seen on the distant horizon. Do not mistake. There is nothing, so far as I have been able to discover, in these private diaries in

cryptic writing that really needs to be concealed from the world—nothing worse than frivolities that to-day are not thought wrong in many English and Scottish homes, homes that are accounted deeply religious—nothing worse than a game of cards with supper at a friend's house, or it may be a dance—quadrilles. But as I turn over the negatives in order, I become conscious of a change. In vain are the lines scanned for the tell-tale words "cards" "dance," or "music." Instead, names appear, names destined ultimately to figure honourably in a great story, and titles of books that helped the work on the potter's wheel already begun. Coincidently the fashion of the pages is changed: the handwriting and the setting out, which had degenerated, again become normal. We have come back to the region of neatness, order, self-control, simplicity, thrift, tenderness, love. There are, I confess, pages in these diaries—few in number—that are not pretty to look at. I can imagine a fair reader at this point asking to see one of these mysterious pages. Nay, madam. Would you like to see the frivolities of your life printed on a page? I trow not. But one of the better pages you might see, and there are hundreds of them.

My own conviction is that young Wesley never went to the bad as do so many young men when they go to the universities or to great cities. Tyerman has misread the story, and made more of Wesley's self-condemnations than reason and plain facts would justify. But I do see clearly, that for many years and in many ways Wesley's life, his better life, prior to the great experience through which he passed in Aldersgate Street, was a struggle—sometimes a terrific struggle—and that, although on the whole making headway, he was not invariably victor. Now that we are in a condition of mind calmly to judge and accurately to appraise, many hidden manuscripts are coming to light. As we read the pages yellow with age, we have no difficulty in understanding the realism and spiritual force of hymns that Wesley himself translated from the German. We see the "waves and storms," the "lambent flames," the "yawning whirlpools," the wilderness of temptation, with the bush that burned and was not consumed. As I reverently handle these precious volumes, and read the family letters belonging to the same period that lie side by side with them in the old tin box where they have been hidden for many generations, I understand as

never before the meaning of the hymn which, in the absence of external proof to the contrary, I would put to the credit of John Wesley:

> "I every hour in jeopardy stand;
> But Thou art my power, and holdest my hand:
> While yet I am calling, Thy succour I feel;
> It saves me from falling, or plucks me from hell.
>
> O who can explain this struggle for life!
> This travail and pain, this trembling and strife!"

But presently, as we turn the pages, another note is heard: we find ourselves in a different atmosphere, and see how true it was then, as many times later,

> "Yet God is above men, devils, and sin;"

and we can hear Wesley singing in the "earthquake watch-night," after he has told the story of the rectory fire:

> "He all shall break through; His truth and His grace
> Shall bring me into the plentiful place,
> Through much tribulation, through water and fire,
> Through floods of temptation, and flames of desire."

The incongruities in these volumes, if sometimes amusing, are also instructive. There are elegant extracts from the poets copied in an exquisite handwriting—copied, doubtless, for ladies in pleasant households, where the young unbeneficed Oxford clergyman, with refined features and silvery laugh and cultured mind, and conversational powers such as few could rival, and courtly manners, was always a welcome guest. In another volume we find a treatise on "the procedure, extent, and limits of the human understanding"—written probably for the instruction of Aspasia, and dated Christmas Eve, 1730. At the end of the same volume there are several pages of German poetry, in the tremulous handwriting of an old man, dated June 6, 1788. You have diaries in abbreviated longhand, or, at a later date, in a shorthand now obsolete, giving the daily life of an Oxford student, of a High Church missionary devotee, much plagued by the human nature within which will not be suppressed, and by men and women whom he is vainly striving to transform into mediæval saints; and also the diaries of a

Methodist evangelist who has to fight his way through herds of wild beasts, and who, though still he "his body feels," now can sing:

"We wrestle not now, but trample on sin."

Side by side with these diaries—sometimes in the same volumes—there are inventories of wearing apparel and "goods and chattels," accounts of personal expenditure, with £40 given to his mother and £20 to Kezzy, names of pupils, lists of books read or for lending, psalms, meditations, extracts, and practically the beginnings of that "Christian Library" on the publication of which he says in the Journals he lost £200, but which he confidently expects will in a later generation justify the labour bestowed upon it. And there is the beginning of the scheme of school manuals, long afterwards completed for the children at Kingswood. There are also a Catechism, a Life of Christ, the famous correspondence with Dr. Burton concerning his projected mission to Georgia, and a number of sermons. One of the volumes he gave to his sister Kezzy, the "fire-child." She used it as a common-place book. At her early death it was returned to "dear Jacky." All his sisters, I note, were in love with him, and he was their confidant; so was his mother, and his brother Samuel, whose charming letters are in this same tin box. Family love and the friendship of good women—yes, and the "jars," as Charles calls them in one of his hymns, "tiffs" as we should call them, little quarrels—played an important part in the making of Wesley and in the making of Methodism. We know so much about the Wesleys, and yet one cannot resist the conviction that it is still an untold story.

In one of the volumes is a summary of events which Wesley regarded as of some importance. The following is a partial translation:

"Wrote Ode on Friendship, on Wm. Cunn.
Transcribed letters to Varanese and Aspasia. Hutchens' two treatises.
New pupils.
April 9. J. Whitelamb came to Oxford.
June 12. Dr. Morley died.
July 9. Mr. Isham chosen rector.
July 29. Mr. B. married Mr. G.'s wife.
Walked (in journeys) about 1,050 miles."

Those who are familiar with Wesley's life will have no difficulty in understanding his interest in the persons named in lines 4 to 6. It is line 2 that has special interest for us just now. "Varanese" was Miss Betty Kirkham, sister of his college friend and one of the first members of the Holy Club. It was through his friendship with the Kirkhams that he became friendly with another deeply interesting family, Mrs. Granville and her two daughters—Mary the charming widow of Mr. Pendarves, and Anne. With these ladies the brothers corresponded, using, after the fashion of the times, fictitious names. John was *Cyrus*, Charles *Araspes*, Mary *Aspasia*, Anne *Selima*, and Betty Kirkham *Varanese*. Mary afterwards became the wife of an Irish dean, figured brilliantly in society, and became the personal friend of King George III. and Queen Charlotte. She desired her friend "Cyrus" to destroy the letters. Apparently he did so, but not until he had made careful copies of his own, of hers, and of Selima's. Apart from the ethical question involved, we may be glad that copies were preserved. There is nothing in them that might not have been published to the world. Their fault is the unnatural stilt in the composition. One wonders why Wesley took the trouble to copy such letters. The fact that the copying seems to have been done in the rectory at Epworth suggests that it may have been to satisfy his mother or to please his sisters. Was this volume, No. II., which contains the first series of letters, given to Mrs. Wesley, and did it remain in her possession during the years until she moved to the rooms prepared for her in the Foundery? Be that as it may, here is a curious fact, that when Wesley wanted an unused, or only partially used, volume in which to write the names of the penitents, bands, and select bands of the Foundery Society—a task which he for years always discharged himself—this precious little book, containing the platonic love letters of Aspasia, Selima, and Cyrus, was forthcoming. Here are two pages taken from the same volume. It was during this early period that Grace Murray joined the Foundery Society, becoming a member of one of the select bands, and eventually its leader. Her name occurs more than once in the volume.

May I be indulged in an imaginary conversation?

*Scene.*—Susanna Wesley's sitting-room in the Foundery.
*Time.*—The month of August in the year 1742.

John Wesley, as he looks out upon us from the Williams portrait, with fine features, long curly hair on his shoulders, and delicate hands.

"Mother, I want a pocket note-book in which to write the names of our members."

"My dear, will not this little volume serve? There are only a few pages occupied by the letters of your old friends. The greater part of the pages are blank."

Truly a strange *dénouement!* Varanese, Aspasia, and Selima introduce us to the first Methodist Class-book and the first Church Roll.

N. Curnock.

# The Wesleys and Westminster.

NOT long ago I took an American visitor through Dean's Yard at night. We went through the arched gateway by the tall pillar which commemorates the losses of the Westminster boys in the Crimean War, and slipped into the silent square. The moon was up, revealing the outlines of roof and window, and silhouetting the bare branches of the trees. He fell under the spell of the scene, accepting the whole as the most harmonious thing he had seen in London. I pointed the hall-marks of the centuries—the doorways, Saxon, Norman, Georgian, and Victorian. He said he preferred to think of it all as it stood in the early days of the eighteenth century, a period well marked in his mind by some book he had read. Venturing still further, we went under the crumbling vaulted arch which leads to Westminster School and Little Cloisters, down the dark passage to the tiny square where the name-plates tell of Abbey clergy, and back by the big cloisters, where the great Abbey rises in majesty, and so out into Dean's Yard again. It was thus some time before we got back into the twentieth century.

Walking over the same ground the other day with Dr. Gow, the Headmaster of Westminster School, I thought of my American visitor. His delight in throwing himself back two centuries and giving himself a place among the worthies of Queen Anne's day, would have been redoubled had he been on this second pilgrimage. This time my whole thought was directed to the Westminster of the early eighteenth century days. I wanted to realise, if it were possible, how the old School and its surroundings looked when Samuel Wesley was a master, Charles Wesley a scholar, and John Wesley an occasional visitor.

In this delightful occupation Dr. Gow was good enough to assist me, first by delving in his library among books for the history of the School and the doings of its more famous scholars, and then by acting

as my guide through the parts of the School which existed in the days of the Wesleys.

As we sat in the library, with portraits of former headmasters looking down benignly upon us, we reviewed some of the better known facts in the history of Samuel Wesley, the master. I was able to hand to Dr. Gow facsimiles of letters written by Samuel Wesley. They were new and interesting to him, and he smiled as he read them. Vivid pictures are in these letters. The rector of Epworth has had nineteen children, of whom ten are living, and an income of £200 a year. How can the eldest son, an usher of Westminster, help his young brothers through school and college? In what difficulties, personal and spiritual, can he act the part of a wise and kindly elder brother? Their strong young spirits, fighting out their own salvation, as Charles fought on "Fighting Green" in the great cloister just outside, are a charge upon his soul and conscience. A schoolmaster may well smile, as he reads the letters, and understand.

Here is the first letter in this little bundle, written by Samuel to his father at Epworth :—

"Honour'd Sir,—My mother tells me that you want to know how accounts stand between you and I; and that You were indispos'd so as not well to be able to write. I am exceeding sorry for the ill news I have heard, the worst part of which is, I think, your concern. My mother has suggested the only Thought that can Support, and I doubt not but she has hinted it more than once to You, and your self to yourself, That He that afflicts, enables to bear it. Dear Father, Be not at all inquisitive after your Debts to me. I entreat one thing, that you will borrow of No One else to pay 'em. Fear not Your sinking Me in Your Ruin. I give You my word that when I am no longer able to bear up, I will frankly, tho' my heart should bleed never so much, acquaint you with it, and, therefore, in the meantime You may be on that head entirely easy. I am sure I may give You a Receipt in form for fifty times the sum. My Mother seems apprehensive, or rather sure, of poor Charles's being taken away from school. I design on Monday to speak to the Bs. of Rochester for a Blew Gown that is £6 a Year Addition, and tho' You should not be able to afford Your Moiety, Yet I will sooner make a collection Annually, among those I know, or even pay the Money while I

can myself, than he shall go away. Unless You think I can at the same expense do You more service another way, which I think can hardly be done. My Brother Jack I can faithfully assure you, gives You no manner of Discouragement from breeding the third a scholar, at a Negative (if You cannot at a Positive) Charge. I am persuaded I need not assure You that I should be very glad this summer to see You at Epworth, but I submit to Your Judgment, whether it is not more expedient that I should pay the money my journey would cost upon my Brother Chas.' Account here; Tho' if I live and can have Money any Way, if You command me, I'll certainly come to Epworth. I beg Your Blessing on him who is and I hope ever will be,

" Your Affectionate and Dutifull Son,

" May 11. S. WESLEY.

" N. gives her Service to You in particular."

There is one passage in this letter which has often been quoted—" My brother Jack, I can faithfully assure you, gives you no manner of discouragement from breeding the third a scholar,"—but I think the whole deserves wide recognition for the light it throws upon the character of this elder son, and the debt which the world owes him for his care of his more famous brothers.

This letter takes us into the middle of the Wesley period at Westminster School. It is dated 1719. Fifteen years before, Samuel Wesley entered the old school as a boy of fourteen, owing his early training to the good mother of the Epworth family. The chronology of the Wesleys at Westminster may be thus put shortly:

1704. Samuel Wesley enters the School.
1707. Elected a King's Scholar.
1711. Goes to Oxford; elected to Christ Church.
1713. Returns as senior usher.
1715. Marries the daughter of the Rev. John Berry.
1716. Receives his brother Charles, who enters the School.
1721. Charles Wesley elected a King's Scholar.
1725. Charles Wesley, captain of Westminster School.
1726. Charles Wesley elected to Christ Church.
1732. Samuel Wesley leaves Westminster for Tiverton.

Twenty-eight years of almost continuous residence; what imprint have they left in the School? Their names are on the registers, but not on the walls and gateways, where hundreds of boys of past generations, with a strange license, have been permitted to carve and paint their signatures. In an old book of epigrammatic verse Samuel appears as the writer of an epitaph on Dr. Radcliffe, probably an election epigram, for it was written in 1711, the year he was elected to Christ Church. In other verses which have been preserved he lamented the death of Dr. Friend, brother of that Headmaster whose portrait may still be seen in a corner of one of the rooms in Dr. Gow's house.

During his long residence as a master, Samuel Wesley must, on many an occasion, have contributed to the amusement as well as the instruction of the boys. We have evidence of his poetic talents in half-a-dozen beautiful hymns, but he was also a writer of epigram and witty verse, which made him known to a literary and political circle, and earned for him the tribute of his epitaph, "a man, for his uncommon wit and learning, for the benevolence of his temper and simplicity of manner, deservedly beloved and esteemed by all."

The old Westminster rate books, now in the muniment room at the Abbey, might identify the house in Dean's Yard in which Samuel Wesley lived. Similar research might identify for us the house of the Huttons in Great College Street, through the archway at the south-east corner of Dean's Yard, though, alas, in the last twelve months the housebreakers have torn great gaps in that quiet haven of eighteenth century homes.

Whatever fortune we might find in the uncatalogued MSS. of the Abbey, we could not discover one landmark of that day. Before Samuel Wesley left Dean's Yard the old dormitory in which the King's Scholars slept went the way of all old buildings. It stood on the green opposite the headmaster's house, and had known some six hundred years of antiquity. The foundations for the new dormitory were laid in 1722, the year after Charles entered "St. Peter's College" as a King's Scholar, but the years were leisurely, and Charles left for Oxford a full four years before the new dormitory was opened, about 1730. If you can get access to College Gardens, that beautiful stretch of velvety lawn and growing trees known also as Abbey Gardens, you may see the "new" dormitory, but little older for near two centuries'

wear. But of the old which sheltered Samuel Wesley, and later took care of the sweet singer of Methodism, not a trace remains.

I went with Dr. Gow to see what else might remain of the School of 1704-1731; out from his old house by the vaulted archway across Little Dean's Yard, to the "up"-school. Everything is "up" at Westminster. Even Sutcliff's old tuck-shop, in Great College Street, closed for demolition during the last few weeks, was "up-Sutcliff." That, by the way, was not an institution of Wesley's day; yet for eighty years Westminster boys have bought their tucker there, and hundreds now grieve for its departed bow-windows, quaint muslins, and the venerable dame who presided over its excellent sweetmeats and cakes.

But to return to the School. Up these steps we find the old brick and stone hall, roofed with ancient timbers, walls garnished with the names of generations of boys. In two respects the great hall differs from that of two hundred years ago. In comparatively recent times it has been panelled to the windows with oak, a luxury of which the old monks, by whom it was used as a dormitory, never dreamed. Then, too, by a sad mishap, the north end was burnt down, and, in the rebuilding of it, the apex disappeared. This must be reckoned a great misfortune, for, being shaped like a shell, the class which met within its semi-circular space also became known as "the shell"; and hence the term spread to other public schools. In the days of the Wesleys the whole School met in this hall, and, no doubt, Samuel took many a class in the shell.* On the left, after entering the big school, a door and passage connect with Ashburnham House, which was standing in that day, and in the occupation of the Crown. Inigo Jones designed this beautiful old house, a delightful specimen of the period, with justly proportioned doors and windows, and many fine mouldings. In the days of the Georges, Ashburnham House contained the Cottonian MSS. Now it is the school library, and a repository of old prints and books. Curiously enough, there is nowhere a picture or print of either of the Wesleys.

Another room, which stands exactly as it did two hundred years

*Did the sons of the rector of Epworth recall the fact that the family arms were escallop shells?

ago, is on the right, before one enters the big school. It is a gloomy, high-ceilinged apartment, with a charming outlook upon College Gardens. Here are arranged the old calf-bound volumes of Dr. Busby's library, left by that most famous Headmaster. To these the usher would have free access.

No stranger passing to-day down the Cloisters and by the south entrance of the Abbey would imagine that the lovely stretch of turf hidden within this ancient square was known among Westminster boys to this day as Fighting Green, or that the shouts of the onlookers at many a fistic encounter once disturbed the solemnity of the Abbey service. Yet here Charles Wesley, like many another Westminster boy of his day, upheld his own and his friends' cause in hot encounter; and gained thereby the friendship of one William Murray, afterwards Earl of Mansfield and Chief Justice of England.

In one of the letters, I find a reference to "the great Westminster Meeting," which Samuel is anxious that Charles shall see. This annual gathering of old boys, originally projected by Judge Jeffreys in the last days of Charles II., was revived with great form and ceremony in January, 1727, when the Duke of Devonshire, the Earl of Oxford, (firm friend and patron of Samuel), Lord Finch, Henry Pelham, Wm. Pulteney, and Dr. John Friend, were stewards and a most distinguished company dined in College Hall. Remembering this, Samuel was anxious in the following year that Charles, who was visiting him in January, 1728, should stay until the meeting.

For six years the meeting was held, but then abandoned because it was found to interfere with the attendance at the election of scholars in July. It was revived again in 1751, and was an annual event for many years, but is now represented by the Elizabethan Club dinners.

GEO. C. CURNOCK.

# An Oxford Wesley Relic.

TO the student of the life and work of John Wesley there comes the growing difficulty of viewing it from an unknown standpoint, and of the unearthing of new incidents. Into the inner life of few public men, of any age, have such keen and penetrating glances been directed, and rarely has a human character so successfully stood the test. To say that it has revealed no flaws, or made known no weaknesses, would be foolish and untrue; for, great and good as he was, John Wesley was a man—"a sinner saved by grace." And so the "fierce light" that has beat upon his work and personality for over one hundred and fifty years has lifted into a wider splendour and a nobler vision the pure "white flower" of a blameless life.

Probably the shadows lie thickest upon his early years—the period anterior to his leaving Oxford, although the wonderful epistolary powers of his parents—especially of his mother—have cast many charming side-lights upon the inner family doings of that quiet Epworth parsonage. And here let me again express my belief that high as Susanna Wesley stands in our love and reverence, full justice has yet to be done to her noble intellectual powers, to the clearness of her judgment, to the serenity of her mind and temper, and to her sweet and fragrant womanliness as all but perfect wife and mother. She, and not John Wesley, was, under God, the Founder of the Methodist Church and people.

When I was asked to contribute an article to the Bi-Centenary Number of the "Recorder," it at once occurred to me that some extracts from a precious little volume, obtained many years ago from the grand-daughter of an early and famous President, might reveal many points of interest for present-day Methodists. That small book, in its dress of dappled-red covers, and firm vellum back, is nothing

less than one of John Wesley's "Journals" "kept" at Oxford, every word being in his own small and beautiful handwriting, and covering the years between 1722 and 1730, though not quite continuous. As was customary in those times, it begins at both ends, and for a long period gives minute particulars of his income and expenditure, lists of his pupils and the books he had read, the places and persons visited, with copies of odes and exercises in various languages. Proofs of his generosity are abundant in the recorded gifts and loans to his mother and sisters, and to the servants at the houses where he was entertained, this habit growing upon him to the end of his life. Early in the "Journal" comes the suggestive entry: "Last week in the month, review my work," and on the 6th of April, 1725, "translated four pages of ye Fathers." In an afternoon of September of the same year, he "Played three sets at tennis," and a few days later "was examined for Orders." On the morning of Sunday, September 19, appears the memorable entry, "Was ordained Deacon by ye Bp. of Oxford" (Potter), and in the afternoon "read Bp. Burnet on 'His own Times,' and disputed warmly on a trifle." Later on, "made a camera obscura," and on March 17, 1726, "Was elected Fellow of Lincoln," his generous father honouring the event by a gift of £12 "out of his poverty." On Thursday, April 21, "Set out for Wroote" (where he spent the summer), "rode to Banbury." Saturday: "Home. All well." "Reading prayers twice" the following day, "and writ a sermon for my Father." On the following day he made himself useful: "Cut stakes. Made 2 benches in ye arbour," this being his sister Nancy's birthday. On the Friday he "gather'd elder flowers," and the following day "gather'd roses," after writing a sermon preached the next day at Finningley. The following Wednesday he "went a-shooting," and to Bawtry Fair the day after. A week later he spent a morning "gathering currants" in the Wroote garden, celebrating his birthday at Epworth on the 17th June, probably alone, and "read prayers, dining alone at ye Tavern, and walked home." The following Saturday he got "3 plovers, and rode to Bawtry to meet my Br. Charles." "Whenever you speak anything by way of reproof, let it be in love," is suggestive of the Wesley of later years, as also is this: "As we wd. willingly suffer a little pain or forego some pleasure for one we really love, so if we sincerely love God, we should

readily do this for Him, for this reason: one act of self-denial is more grateful to our Maker, than the performance of many lesser duties, as it is an undeniable instance of ye love we bear Him." A few mornings later he is reading "in ye arbour," and in the afternoon "employ'd by my Father in ye garden," afterwards "talking with M.M." (my mother) "of prudence (a species of wisdom), and chiefly respecting one's behaviour in company." "If any odd parcel of time lie on your hands, employ it for God"! "The Sabbath is patriarchal and Judaical; the observance of it is a moral as well as a positive command"; "Zeal does not so much consist in heat of passion as in earnestness and sincerity," are a few gems of thought we may read with profit. A little later he "began paraphrasing the 104th Psalm," and the following week "writ from my Father's Diary my Mother's and Sisters' account of the disturbances at Epworth," and on Tuesday, September 6, he "prayed by my Sister Nancy," afterwards transcribing a portion of his father's "Job." On the 13th he "writ a sermon on rash judging," and then goes on to give his first reference to the mysterious noises that so much disturbed the parsonage household and the whole district. "Monday night, or rather Tuesday morning, September 13th, I waked a little before 2 o'clock and cd. not go to sleep again. About a ¼ after 2 ye chamber door open'd, clapt to again twice, loud, distinctly; Tory, who was in bed, growl'd, bark'd all ye time. On Wednesday my Brother and I were trying to catch a chicken in ye same room about 12 o'clock. I stay'd at ye door to catch it if it came that way. While I was standing about a yard from it, looking at it, ye door, which made a noise, moved slowly to. I open'd it, looked, but no one beside us two was above stairs." Following his example, we will leave these remarkable occurrences without comment.

On the 15th he "was god-father to my Sister Nancy's boy, with Mr. Sam Turner" (the birth of this nephew he records on the 1st inst.). On the 19th inst. his home-visit comes to a close, and he sets out for Oxford. "Dined at Susworth Inn, and at ye Crown at Nottingham at 6. Walk'd round ye Castle, 80 paces long, 40 broad—217 steps under ye rock; fine prospect from ye top. Ye house built 50 years ago. Tuesday: dined at ye White Horse at Leicester. At Bunny (?) about 4 miles from Nottm. saw Sir T. Parkin's house; on

a wall of the park is inscribed: 'Thos. Parkyn, ye 2nd Baronet of the Family, completed this wall of 3 miles in compass in 3 years.' Over the stone-seat the translated inscription runs:—

"'Sit down here, if you are tired
With walking, as you are desired.'

Supp'd at Cave's Inn. Much rain. Wednesday, dined at Banbury, ye 3 Tuns. Robin's mare hurt. Hired a horse to Oxon at ye George."

From his busy life at Oxford he finds time to visit Blenheim and "admire the tapestry," to have a morning for hunting, and for sundry visits to his friend, Robert Kirkham, at Stanton, where he fell in love with his host's sister, Betty. Frequent references, largely spoiled to us by his extensive use of abbreviated shorthand, are made to this lively lady, with whom he corresponded for nearly three years under the fancy title of "Varanese" or "V.," and his "Cyrus," his affections being afterwards transferred to a young widow named Mrs. Pendarves. There is little doubt that at this period Wesley was very susceptible to the charms of the fair sex, and that as a young man of engaging manners, and high intellectual and conversational powers, he found considerable favour in their sight.

On the 11th of February in this year (1727), and not on the 14th, as stated by Tyerman, he records that he took his "Master's (M.A.) degree." A few days later he "heard Mr. Isham at St. Aldate's on ye dependence of ye understanding on ye will." A few items of expenditure during his residence in Oxford may here be noted: "Silk Stockings, 13s. 6d.; ½ a lb. of bohea, 6s. 6d.; dinner, 6d." (frugal fare!). "Extinguisher, snuffers, dark lantern, bellows, 4s. 6d." (surely a bargain!), "pins, needles, thread, and ribbon, 10d.; a lb. of tea, 18s.; a pair of shoes, 4s." For 1730 his expenses, including "giving, £4 3s.," amount to £91 3s. 10d., of which "letters and books" absorb £7 19s. 1d.

And now, leaving this precious little volume, portions of which we hope to incorporate in the perfected "Journals" now in the capable hand of our Connexional Editor, let us turn to a few of the MS. letters penned at this period by members of the Wesley family. In the large number in the writer's reverent keeping there is scarcely one that does not bear witness to the mental energy and intellectual force of

the mother of them all, Susanna Wesley. Here is one written by her son John, from Oxford, and dated the day following his 22nd birthday (June 18, 1725), and, while bearing ample witness to the High Church bondage in which his "imprisoned spirit lay," showing an earnest "feeling after" the light and truth that, thirteen years later, in that "little room" in Aldersgate Street, revealed to his awakened soul the face of God in Christ. It begins:

"DEAR MOTHER,—I am very much surprised at my sister's behaviour towards my brother Charles, and wish it is not, in some measure, of his own procuring. She was always, as far as I could perceive, apt to resent an affront, and I am afraid some reflection or other upon her, of which I have formerly heard him make several, has by accident come to her knowledge. If so, I don't wonder at anything which might follow; for though I believe she does not want piety, I am not of opinion she abounds in charity, having observed her sometimes to retaliate with great bitterness an imagined contempt or slighting expression. . . . . You have so well satisfied me as to the tenets of Thomas à Kempis, that I have ventured to trouble you on a more dubious occasion. I have heard one I take to be a person of good judgment say that she would advise no one very young to read Dr. Taylor on 'Living and Dying.' She added that he almost put her out of her senses when she was 15 or 16 years old, because he seemed to exclude all from being in a way of salvation who did not come up to his rules, some of which are altogether impracticable. A fear of being tedious will make me confine myself to one or two instances, in which I am doubtful, though several others might be produced of almost equal consequence." (He then quotes Taylor: "Give God thanks for every weakness, deformity, or imperfection, and accept it as a favour and grace, an instrument to resist pride." And here Mrs. Wesley interpolates a MS. note: "Weakness, deformity, or imperfection of body are not evil in themselves, but accidentally become good or evil, according as they affect us and make us good or bad." Then he goes on, after giving several extracts from Taylor's book) "The Holy Ghost confers on us the graces we pray for, and our souls receive into them the seeds of an immortal nature. Now surely these graces are not of so little force as that we can't perceive

whether we have 'em or no, and if we dwell in Christ and Christ in us, which He will not do till we are regenerate, certainly we must be sensible of it. . . . But if we can never have any certainty of our being in a state of salvation, good reason it is that every moment should be spent, not in joy, but fear and trembling, and then undoubtedly in this life we are of all men the most miserable. God deliver us from such a fearful expectation as this! Your blessing and advice will much oblige, and, I hope, improve, your dutiful son,

"JOHN WESLEY."

A few extracts from a noble epistle of four folio pages, written by his mother, dated Wroot, November 10, 1725, and addressed to "Dear Jacky," at Oxford, we can only find space for:

"Your first of August 4 requires no answer, only there's one passage in it which I don't understand. You say that Berkeley has convinced you that there is no such thing as matter in the world. If by the real existence of matter is meant a substance exterior to the mind, and distinct from its being perceived, what does he mean by imperceptible matter?"

Again: "Your second bears date August 24, wherein you are satisfied about humility, and I wish you had also a better notion of that faith which is proposed to us as a condition of salvation. I think Pearson's definition of divine or saving faith is good, and no way defective. For though the same thing may be an object of faith as revealed, and an object of reason as deducible from rational principles, yet I insist upon it that the virtue of faith, by which, through the merits of our Redeemer, we must be saved, is an assent to the truth of whatever God hath been pleased to reveal, because He hath revealed it, and not because we understand it."

Again: "If it be a weak virtue that can't bear being laughed at, I am very sure that 'tis a strong and well-confirmed virtue that can stand the test of a brisk buffoonery. I doubt there are too many instances of people that, being well inclined, have yet made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience merely through a false modesty, and because they could not bear the raillery of their companions. . . . I would, therefore, advise all young persons in their beginning of a Christian

course to shun the company of prophane wits as they would the plague or poverty; and let them never contract an intimacy with any but such as have a good sense of religion. And if 'tis their hap to live where few of that character can be found, let them learn the art of living alone, and when once they are masters of that rare secret, and know how to converse with God and themselves, they'll want no other company. For, properly speaking, no man wants what he can be happy without."

A quaint letter from Bawtry, dated June 21, 1727, addressed to John at Oxford, must be our sole illustration of the epistolatory humour of the Rector of Epworth, Samuel Wesley, the elder:

"DEAR LADS,—This morning I had the satisfaction of yours of the 14th inst. In answer to Jno. I had no more reason to doubt your duty to me than you have had of mine to you. Tho' I am sure you can't think it proper there sh'd be two masters in a family. Ah, Charles! You shall see Wroote again, and ye Bowers of Bliss as soon as I'm able. . . . Go on with Blenheim—beat 'em all, or at least be not out-distanced, as I've heard your father was not.—Your loving father, "S. WESLEY."

Here is a sad-toned and somewhat peevish letter from his sister Mary, afterwards the not very happy wife of her father's curate, John Whitelamb, and also addressed to John at Oxford, January 20, 1726:

"DEAR BROTHER JACK,—Tho' I have not the good hap to be one of your favourite sisters, yet I hope you won't grudge the postage of a letter now and then, which, if it can't be afforded, I desire you would let me know that I may trouble you no further." (After giving him an account of some family differences, she goes on to say:) "But here I'll leave, and tell you some news. Mary Owram is married to-day, and we only need your company to make us completely merry (for who can be sad where you are?). I've got Miss B. to buy me some silk to knit you another pair of gloves, and I don't doubt but you will doubly like the labour for the buyer's sake. . . . My sister Hetty's child is dead, and your godson grows a lovely boy, and will, I hope, talk to you when he sees you.—Your loving sister, "MARY WESLEY."

Another sister, Keziah, writes him from Oxford, during one of her visits there, May 13, 1738, the handwriting being very beautiful and full of character. After several strong remarks as to his and Charles's want of sympathy with her, she concludes:

"My Dear Brother,—I can't impute the coldness of your behaviour to me to proceed from anything but the advice of some of the sour-headed saints here. If the tenderest friendship can be proved to be contrary to the Christian spirit, I desire to give even you up, tho' I can't do it without pain because you are the only friend I have in the world. . . . My dear, I can't write any more.—Yours till death,

"K. W."

The following letter from Dr. Burton, Master of Christ Church College, Oxford, asking him to go out with General Oglethorpe's expedition to Georgia, is probably the oldest Methodist Missionary document in existence, and is a conclusive proof of the high esteem in which the young clergyman was held by the authorities:

"C. C. C. Oxon, Sept. 8, 1735.

"Dear Sir,—I had it in commission to wait upon you at Oxford, whither by this time I imagined you might have arrived. Your short conference with Mr. Oglethorpe has raised the hopes of many good persons that you and yours would join in an undertaking which cannot be better executed than by such instruments. I have thought again of the matter, and upon the result of the whole cannot help again recommending the undertaking to your choice, and the more so since in our inquiries there appears such an unfitness in ye generality of people. The state of ease, luxury, levity, inadvertency, observable in most of the plausible and popular doctors, are disqualifications in a Christian teacher, and would lead us to look for a different set of people. The more men are inured to contempt of ornaments and conveniences of life, to serious thoughts and bodily austerities, the fitter they are for a state which more properly represents our Christian pilgrimage, and if, upon consideration of the matter, you think yourselves the fit instruments for so good a work, you will be ready to embrace this opportunity of doing good which is not in vain offered

to you. Mr. Oglethorpe, with company, embarks ye first of October. Be pleas'd to write a line signifying your thoughts to me or to Mr. Oglethorpe, and if by advice I can be assistant to you, you may command my best services.—Yours affectionately,

"J. BURTON.

"P.S.—Mr. Horn tells me he heard you were at Manchester. I presume you are with Mr. Clayton deliberating about this affair. My service to him."

GEO. STAMPE.

# Wesley's Missionary Call.

FOR the following extremely interesting letter we are indebted to Mr. R. Thursfield Smith. It was written to his brother Samuel, who wished to compel John to take the cure of a parish. The autograph is now, we understand, in the possession of a member of a collateral branch of the Wesley family:—

"Oxon, March 4, 1734-5.

"DEAR BROTHER,—I had rather dispute (if I must dispute) with you than with any man living; because it may be done with so little expense of time and words.

"The question is now brought to one point, and the whole of the argument will be in a single syllogism:

"'Neither hope of doing greater good nor fear of any evil ought to deter you from what you have engaged yourself to. But you have engaged yourself to undertake the cure of a parish; therefore neither that hope, nor that fear ought to deter you from it.'

"The only doubt is whether I have engaged myself or not? You think I did at my ordination, 'before God and His High Priest.' I think I did not.

"However, I own I am not the proper judge of the oath I then took. It being certain and allowed by all——. (A quotation in Latin follows.*) Therefore it is not I, but the High Priest of God before whom

*This sentence could not be fully deciphered. Tyerman, quoting the letter, probably at second hand, simply omits the sentence. We submitted it to an expert, who with some difficulty has reconstructed the text, and given a translation. He says: "The general sense is clear. I make it somewhat as follows:—'To words, in which anyone is caused to take an oath, the true meaning, and also the manner and extent of the obligation of the oath, is supplied from the mind, not of the taker of the oath, but of him who demands it.'"

I contracted that engagement, who is to judge of the nature and extent of it. Accordingly the post after I received yours, I referred it entirely to him; proposing this single question to him, whether I had at my ordination engaged myself to undertake the cure of a parish or no? His answer runs in these words:—

"'REVD. SIR,—It doth not seem to me that at your ordination you engaged yourself to undertake the cure of any parish, provided you can, as a clergyman, better serve God and His Church, in your present or some other station.'

"Now, that I can as a clergyman better serve God and His Church in my present station, I have all reasonable evidence."

Mr. Thursfield Smith adds: "See letters 5, 6, etc., in Priestley's collection of Wesley's Letters. The above is not there."

Special interest attaches to this letter because it marks the critical point in Wesley's life when the decision had to be taken with reference to his future vocation. The father was practically dying. His eldest son, Samuel, who himself had declined to seek for the appointment to Epworth, urged that John should apply for it. For reasons which at the time seemed, as Tyerman says, "sophistical and inclusive," John Wesley resisted the pressure put upon him. This letter containing the reply of the Bishop of Oxford did not absolutely close the controversy between the two brothers, but so far as John's own mind was concerned, it seems to have marked the end of any hesitation set up by natural affection and a desire to please his father and his brother. It is interesting to remember that it was Dr. Potter, Bishop of Oxford, whose opinion, so definitely expressed, settled the conscientious doubt in Wesley's mind as to the nature and extent of the obligation imposed by the vows of his ordination. The dispute really lay between "Epworth Parish" and "The World is my Parish."

A year later the old rector died, and the Epworth living passed into other hands.

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He further remarks that the words not clear are "evidently a quotation from some law book, probably from Justinian's Code or the Digesta (Libri Pandectarum). He suggests verification from the original, and adds, "The sentence appears to me meant for '*Verbis in quibus quis jurejurando adigitur, sensum genuinum, ut et obligationem sacramenti modum et mensuram praestitur a mente non Praestantis, sed exigentis juramentum.*'"

We have before us the old man's last letter to his son John. It is dated Jan. 21, 1735, and, in its complete form never before given, reads thus :—

"DEAR SON,—About an hour since your letter of the 13th instant came to hand, and indeed not before I had need of it, especially when I considered how extremely weak I was, and found myself grow sensibly weaker every day, being so disturbed with the prospect of all I was to expect from my last that my soul refused comfort, and I had a very little share of common sense left, especially when I considered how extremely weak I was, and found myself grow sensibly weaker every day by being ground between pain and the fore-mentioned considerations, together with the apprehension that I must soon leave the world, and Job unfinished together with it. However, God help'd me so much at last that I hope I did entirely leave both myself and all I had with Him, to do just what He pleases with me, and since that I've had a little more rest. My people, I must needs say, have been very kind to me during my long illness, which has brought me now so low that I cannot walk half-a-dozen times about my chamber; but, then, I am often refreshed with seeing Mr. Hale's noble present of books lying in my window, near half of which I have already spread in my parish, some to those who came to see me, and to others I have sent them, and with very good effect, many having read them, and some lent to others. Whereby a spirit of Christianity, beyond what I have hitherto known, seems to be raised among them; one proof of which is in the greater frequency of the sacrament. Nor is Mr. Whitelamb wanting in any part of his duty, though I am not able to preach or give the sacrament to them myself, except one day, and that with his assistance.

"So first to the first, and now let's go on to matter of less moment, though I hope not quite frivolous neither. Had I had Mr. Rivington's advice at first, all my plates and Cuts I find had been done before this, and that with less expense, and to greater Perfection. The agreement you have made with the Graver seems to be very reasonable; whether the Cuts are to be done in Sheets or half-Sheets I leave to you and Mr. Rivington; but I wou'd have Leviathan's Rival, that is the Whale, as well as the Crocodile, and as for the Elephant, he is so common that he need not be added. I'm glad the

Tombs want no more than retouching, and especially that Mr. Garden is not ill-pleased with 'em. Job in Adversity I leave to your Direction, as likewise the Frontispiece, which Mr. Vertue is doing, who now duns me pretty hard for money for it, and I've writ him lately to send me word what he'll have for the whole when 'tis finish'd, and what he desires in part, with a promise to send him some money by the first Opportunity I have of doing it; and as soon as ever I hear from him you shall from me. As for poor Pentapolis, it must e'en shift as it can, tho' my heart is pretty much in it, and I've taken no little pains about it. This I must likewise leave with you: but can't you send me a Copy of the Draughts before they'r engraven, that I may weigh 'em as is proper? As for Job's Horse, I can't for my Life imagine how I shall get him into my Lord Oxford's Stable; I mean get Liberty to inscribe it to him, unless you yourself cou'd speak to my Lord Duplin about it, who seems a very well natur'd Gentleman, and I believe wou'd not be unready to employ his good Offices for me. Have you yet found any News of *De Morbo Jobi*, which has been so long incognito? Or is there any thing else that you find wanting? I heartily commend you and your Brother to God, and am this Evening, Your somewhat liver Father, "SAM. WESLEY."

"'I have Waited for Thy SALVATION, O God,
And MAZAL-JOB is coming.'

"This day in the morning Mr. Whiteley went—God knows Whither, tho' he got his finishing Stroke in a Draught of double Cinnamon Water of near a full pint the day before in the morning. But this wou'd not lay Conscience to sleep, tho' it soon did him, as well as his Senses, Speech, and Reason, for 'twas plain that he dyd in inward Horrour, and had been so sometime before, his Body just before his Departure turning as black as a Coal—However, I have a better Account to give you of several young Men, the most considerable in my parish, that are lately marryd, and from whom I hope either I or my successors shall receive Comfort, whereof I may write you more at large in my next. Mr. Whiteley is to be buryd this night, tho' I'm afraid no great Lamentation will be made over him."

The letter is addressed "To Mr. John Wesley, Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxon (per London)." It was probably dictated to his

daughter Mary. The signature is autograph, also the triumphant lines which head the postscript. The letter is endorsed in Wesley's own handwriting, "January 21, 1734-5. The last I received from him." The cost of postage was sevenpence. The Mr. Whitelamb referred to was Mr. Wesley's curate, formerly a member of the Holy Club; he afterwards married Mary Wesley, whose letter to her brother John Mr. Stampe has quoted.

It is impossible, in the narrow space here available, to give a full account of the interesting circumstances which followed the death of the rector of Epworth, and finally issued in the Mission to Georgia. Mr. Stampe has quoted the letter written by Dr. John Burton, of Corpus Christi College, in which he urges Wesley to undertake this Mission. Dr. Burton had met Wesley in London, and had introduced him to General Oglethorpe. His letter (which is franked "James Oglethorpe") was sent to Wesley at Rev. Mr. Clayton's, in Salford. Mr. Clayton at that time was in charge of the Salford Parish Church. Until quite recently he had been a member of the Holy Club. It is interesting to note that in this same visit to Manchester Wesley consulted the famous Dr. Byrom, whose system of shorthand he and Charles afterwards adopted. Dr. Burton's letter refers to Wesley's habit of severe asceticism. This he regarded as a qualification for the Georgian appointment he so earnestly desired his friend to accept.

The following letter is transcribed—not in Wesley's own handwriting—in one of the volumes containing the Georgian Journal. It is without address, but Henry Moore (apparently) had reason for entering it as written by Wesley to Dr. John Burton. The date is September 30, 1735. Though (apparently) out of chronological order, it will be convenient to insert it here. Whether written to Dr. Burton or to someone else, the letter shows what Wesley's religious position was at this critical moment. It explains also much in his Georgia troubles.

"Dear Sir,—The dining in the hall on Friday seems to me utterly unjustifiable; it is giving offence in the worst sense, giving men occasion to think that innocent which is grossly sinful. The plausible pretences for throwing off the very form of godliness, that must be esteemed if we will do good; that we must keep those things private

wherein we differ from the world, and so on, you will find fully examined in Nichodemus *(sic)*. The Bishops can no more dispense with the law, the reason of which still subsists, than you or I can. Fasting is not a means of chastity only, but of deadness to pleasure, and of heavenly mindedness, and, consequently, is necessary (in such measure as agrees with health) to all persons in all times of life. Had I been less strict, as 'tis called, I should have not only not done more good than I have (that is God by me), but I never should have done any at all, nor, indeed, desired to do any. Still, a man giving offence will do no good, and the more offence he gives by adhering to the Gospel of Christ the more good he will do and the more good he does the more offence he will give. As to lukewarm company, I can only advise you, first, to keep out of it as much as you can; second, when you cannot, to pray before, after and during your stay in it, fervently and without ceasing—but this you can't do; I know it; but God can make you able to do it and in Him you must put your trust.

"I am not satisfied (as I have told the Rector for this twelve months past) that the Wednesday fast is strictly obligatory, though I believe it very ancient, if not apostolical. However, he never saw what I writ upon it.

"Dr. Tilley's sermons on free will are the best I ever saw. His text is, 'Work out your salvation with fear and trembling.' May you all assist one another so to do, and be not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. Bear ye one another's burdens. I charge Mr. Robins, in the name of the Lord Jesus, that he no longer halt between two opinions. If the Lord be God, serve Him, love Him with all your heart, serve Him with all your strength, and pray for us that faith and utterance may be given us, that we may speak boldly as we ought to speak."

We return ten days in the story. The following autograph letters are in the Colman collection. Wesley has decided to go to Georgia. Dr. Burton writes:

"Old Palace Yard, September 18.

"Dear Sir,—It was with no small pleasure that I heard your resolution on the point under consideration. I am persuaded that an opportunity is offer'd of doing much good in an affair for the con-

ducting of which we can find but few proper instruments. 'Tis an happy circumstance that you would offer yourself on this occasion. May your hands be strengthened, and your endeavours prospered! Your undertaking adds greater credit to our proceedings, and the propagation of religion will be the distinguishing honour (?) of our Colony, this has ever in like cases been the desideration: a defect seemingly (?) lamented but scarce remedied: with greater satisfaction, therefore, we enjoy your readiness to undertake the work. When it is known that good men are thus employed, the pious and charitable will be more encouraged to promote this work. You have too much steadiness of mind to be disturbed by light scoffs of the idle and profane.

"I heard you were to preach before the University the 21st. You are desired by Mr. Oglethorpe to come hither as soon as you can. Let me, then, presume to point out your way. Then you can come to my house at Maplederham by Monday noon or night. You come through Wallingford, seven miles beyond, on the river by Maplederham. I will attend and convey you from thence to London, and introduce you to our friends, and will be assistance to you as well as I can. If you write answer by the promise post, your letter will come to me by Sunday, at Maplederham, near Reading.

"Let me put a matter to be considered by your brother Charles. Would it not be more advisable that he were in orders? This would easily be obtained.

"My respect and good wishes attend you and yours,

"JOHN BURTON."

The following is profoundly interesting. Tyerman knew of its existence, but was only able to give a brief summary of its contents. It is now published in extenso. Wesley went on board the "Simmonds" at Gravesend, October, 1735:

"Eton College, Sept. 28, 1735.

"DEAR SIR,—This day, being obliged to attend at our Altar upon the celebration of the Sacrament, I left Town without seeing you whom I know not where to find. You may imagine that some circumstances or other would certainly suggest fresh matter to my thoughts, and give me leave to say what occurs to me on this occasion.

"The motive of your pious undertaking is the desire of doing good to the souls of others, and, in consequence of that, to your own. You will readily improve the first opportunity offered to attain this end. Now, a very considerable one is offered before you come to Georgia. I mean while you are ashipboard; there you will have a numerous family under your care, and confined to attendance; your private as well as public address to them will then most probably have the best effect on their minds while they see the wonders of the Lord in the deep: thus will they come better disposed for religious habits from such impressions. It may be perhaps more convenient for you to be all together, but it would be much better for the people if some one of you should be in the other ship; you may perhaps alternately attend in the other vessels as they go in company. Pray labour this first point: what will be the most useful exercise of the clergyman's abilities and most beneficial to the people?

"Under the influence of Mr. Oglethorpe giving weight to your endeavours much may be effected under your present circumstances. The Apostolical manner of preaching from house to house will, through God's grace, be effectual to turn many to righteousness. You come to a people, some ignorant, and most disposed to licentiousness: your good offices will be required at Savannah town (at first), which is but a few miles from the Indians. The magistrate will authorise your access to every family, and the younger will be under obligation to receive instructions. I consider you all, at first and for some time, as joint labourers in the same place; you will soon be dispersed to your several stations and employments in the same work; and you will find abundant room for the exercise of patience and prudence as well as piety. The generality of the people are babes in the progress of their Christian life, to be fed with milk instead of strong meat. The wise householder will bring out of his stores food proportioned to the necessities of his family. The circumstances of the present Christian pilgrimage will furnish the most affecting subjects of discourse, and what arises *pro re natâ* will have greater influence than a laboured discourse on a subject in which men think themselves not so immediately concerned. Thus the 107th Psalm, the history of the patriarch sojourning, Ezra and Nehemiah, etc., furnish matter suited to their apprehension and circumstances. And 'tis to be ob-

served that historical narratives gain attention more than other sorts of discourses, and insensibly convey with them the good moral which often miscarries under other sorts of conveyance. Of this kind was our Saviour's preaching in parables to the people.

"One end for which we were associated was the conversion of negro slaves. As yet nothing has been attempted in this way, but a door is opened, and not far from home. The Purisburgers have purchased slaves, they act under our influence, and Mr. Oglethorpe will think it advisable to begin there. You see the harvest is truly great—*και τις ικανος εσι προς ταυτα.* This is a point among others to be kept in view.

"With regard to your behaviour and manner of address, that must be determined according to the different circumstances of persons, etc. But you will alway in the use of means consider the great end, and, therefore, your applications will of course vary. You will keep in view the pattern of the Gospel preacher, St. Paul, who became all things to all men that he might gain some. Here is a nice trial of Christian prudence. Accordingly in every case you would distinguish between what is essential and what is circumstantial to Christianity; between what is indispensable and what is variable; between what is of Divine and what is of human authority. I mention this because men are apt to deceive themselves in such cases, and we see the traditions and ordinances of men frequently insisted on with more rigour than the Commandments of God, to which they are subordinate; singularities of less importance are often espoused with more zeal than the weighty matters of God's law. As in all points we love ourselves, so especially in our hypotheses. Where a man has, as it were, a property in a notion, he is most industrious to improve it, and that in proportion to the labour of thought he has bestowed upon it; and as its value rises in imagination, we are in proportion more unwilling to give it up; and we dwell upon it more pertinaciously than upon considerations of general necessity and use. This is a flattering mistake, against which we should guard ourselves. Now, as you are placed among people of various persuasions in religious matters the great difficulty is in your behaviour.

"The trustees have been careful to provide all manner of stores for the temporal necessities and conveniences of our people; I could wish that the like care had been taken to supply the spiritual householder,

that he might be furnished with proper tools for every good work. I hope that by the liberality of pious persons you will be enabled to procure all books of more immediate use. I presume you have Gastrel's "Institutes," Concordance, etc.; lesser instruments of knowledge than these you should have severally.

"I am now on the road towards Shermanbury, in Sussex, whither I was called about ten days ago on account of my mother's indisposition. I ventured to postpone that visit hitherto. I hope to see you at Gravesend, if possible. I write in haste what occurs to my thoughts. At a leisure hour you may hear from me again. May God prosper your endeavours for the propagation of the Gospel.

"Your sincere friend,

"JOHN BURTON."

# The Society Room in Aldersgate Street.

AFTER two hundred years the world turns to Epworth, the place of the birth of the two Wesleys. But the place of their new-birth takes precedence over even this, and if a Methodist visitor will take his stand at the angle of the Church of St. Botolph, Aldersgate, and face northward, he will have within a very short distance two sites of supreme interest in the story of Methodist Origins. To his left is Little Britain. Somewhere within this Bray the brazier had his home. Diagonally across the broader thoroughfare of Aldersgate, to his right, is all that remains of Nettleton Court, to which of recent years has been commonly attributed the honour of being the scene of John Wesley's conversion. That thus, within a few hundred yards in each case, the visitor should have the place where Charles Wesley entered into Gospel rest, and the place where John Wesley felt his "heart strangely warmed"—it is enough to warm strangely the tourist heart too. Can these so memorable spots be located with any precision?

The photograph of a map helped our inquiry. Mr. P. J. Lupton, a trustee of the vanished Jewin Street Chapel, and of City Road, somewhere about 1881 called the attention of the vicar of St. Botolph's, the Rev. S. Flood Jones—long so well known as the Precentor of Westminster Abbey—to an old plan of 1739-40, preserved amongst the parish documents, and explained to him the deep interest of the neighbourhood for all students of the history of religion in England in the eighteenth century. The vicar and his churchwardens and vestry clerk responded warmly, and had the old map reproduced in lithography. From it the engraving has been photographed. The

similar map in Maitland's "Survey of London," before referred to, very closely approximates in date.

Mr. Lupton is one of the oldest business men of the Aldersgate Ward, and has given almost a life-long study to its municipal and Methodist history. He marks upon the plan at 2, Nettleton Court, and at 1, the site of Bray's house. Of the first there can, of course, be no doubt. Of the second identification more needs to be said. The busy rush of the thronging crowds of to-day must be forgotten, and the very aspect of the houses transformed, if our imagination is to reconstruct for us Wesley's Aldersgate Street. "Little Britain," says Maitland, "is very ruinous. Turning northward"—the sharp, elbow-like bend is there still, as it is shown on the old map—"this part of the street is well-built, and though much inhabited by booksellers, from the pump at Duck Lane,"—afterwards more respectably named Duke Street—"who deal chiefly in old books, it is now (1742) much deserted, and has little trade." It had been in its glory in the days of Charles II., but already the book-publishing business was migrating to Paternoster Row. Mr. Lupton's reference mark, 1, is placed between Pelican Court and the Town Ditch. Maitland says: "Pelican Court, a large place with good houses, well inhabited. At the upper end it divides itself into two courts, and both bear the same name." The buildings of Christ's Hospital long ago swept away Court and Ditch, and are now being swept away in their turn. But in this Court Mr. Lupton, with much confidence, locates the house we want. Mr. G. J. Stevenson, the well-known Methodist antiquary and author, in his Wesleyan Hymn Book and its Associations, p. 11 (ed. 1898), says with equal confidence: "After many years of diligent and careful inquiry, the exact position of Mr. Bray's residence in Little Britain was ascertained towards the close of the year 1881." But he says no more. In his "Wesley Family," p. 391, he only writes: "Whose residence is said to have been at the west corner of Little Britain, near Christ's Hospital." In fact, as I learn from Mr. Lupton, Stevenson and he, with the assistance of the vestry clerk of the time, took the rating-book of the parish, in which the ratepaying residents stood entered in house-row, and then house by house compared the roll of names with the map and with the buildings of the south side of the street, until, when they came to John Bray's name, they had reached

the spot where the reference mark stands. Probably the findings of such a group of investigators may be as near to certainty as can now be reached, but the result is that the house is gone where Charles Wesley at Whitsuntide, 1738, lay sick of his pleurisy; and where on the Whit-Sunday morning he "lay musing and trembling," until by-and-by "the Spirit of God strove with my own and with the evil spirit, till by degrees He chased away the darkness of my unbelief. I found myself convinced, I knew not how nor when; and immediately fell to intercession." (Just as his brother did, the moment after his heart got "warmed"; the agreement is noteworthy.) In that house "the hymn" was written during the next two days; possibly No. 201, but, with more probability, No. 30, of our old Hymn Book. On the Wednesday night it was there sung for the first time, by Charles, by John—full of his new-found faith—and by a rejoicing roomful of young believers who had escorted him to his brother's lodgings. Mrs. Hutton, the mother of his friend James, had been not a little displeased that, just as all was arranged for Charles Wesley to come and be nursed and mothered at her kindly, refined home under the Abbey walls in Westminster—"I offered him two of my best rooms"—he "would accept of neither, but chose to go to a poor brazier's . . . that that brazier might help him forward in his conversion." He was carried to Bray's in a sedan-chair. Bray was "an ignorant mechanic," so the University man says; but Charles believed that God had raised him up to supply the place, and to finish the work, of Peter Böhler. It was Bray's one supreme service to Christ's cause. It is pathetically painful to discover in the Journals of the brothers how swiftly and sadly Bray sank from his high level of simplicity and usefulness, until he at last disappears from our view altogether.

And where was the memorable place in the case of John? It is remarkable with what singular indefiniteness he has printed in his Journals the localities of two such critical incidents in his life as his conversion and his first breaking through to preach in the open air. The one is simply a "society in Aldersgate Street," the other is simply "a little eminence in a ground adjoining to the city" of Bristol. He can be definite enough when he pleases, and this last can readily and exactly be ascertained. In the Moravian archives at Fetter Lane are

preserved some precious letters of Wesley, written from Bristol during April and May, 1739, reporting every Monday to the Society in Fetter Lane the stirring incidents of each week's campaign in those memorable months. They fill out the briefer records of the printed Journal with most illuminative details, and very definitely specify "a brickyard," which from other sources we know to have been "at the farther end of St. Philip's Plain," as the "ground adjoining to the city." But where was the former?

Nettleton Court can easily be discovered upon the map. It will be seen that it broadens out into a tiny open square, which is again accessible from the rear. The entrance from Aldersgate Street is now built over. The upper door of the King's Arms pretty exactly corresponds to the old opening of the Court. The premises of the British Tea Table Company, No. 28-9, occupy the site of the buildings once bounding the old passage on the North. Maidenhead Court, a few yards farther on, is still a busy thoroughfare, and an old covered passage in it, on the right hand, gives access to the poor fragment which is left of the open square of Nettleton Court. Another old arched passage, nearer the street, is closed with louvre boards, whose purpose the visitor to the Tea Table rooms soon discovers. In the north wall he will notice a hopper-shaped opening, which is really the other end of the passage. Ventilation is thus secured, and a right of way preserved. Mr. Lupton informs me that at the left-hand shoulder-like angle, where the court broadened out into the tiny square, he was able to locate pretty confidently some old premises known as the Hall House, which seemed to him to be, in all probability, the site of a room which Benham, in his "Memoirs of James Hutton," says Hutton took for a society-room in 1736. They were demolished as insanitary and unfit for habitation about 1815. So, then, at the price of a cup of tea, the inquirer who will choose his seat in the south-east angle of the Tea Table Company's room, may get upon the actual spot where, like some others, Mr. Lupton strongly believes that John Wesley found faith. It belongs to the freehold of the late Sir John Staples; and very naturally an ardent, life-long Methodist like Mr. Lupton is not satisfied that the ground is not in Methodist hands, though, he assured me, it had three times been possible for us easily to secure it. He truly says: "Methodism was born there."

If there. But it is curious how very little definite proof can be found. None of the early writers, of original authority for us, mention Nettleton Court. Moore, Whitehead, Crowther, Hampson, Nightingale—all are content to repeat Wesley's own indefinite words: "a society in Aldersgate Street," as even Tyerman does. Jackson's "Life of Charles Wesley" follows them in this. Benham writes in 1856, and he is, so far as I have myself discovered, or can learn from many expert students of Methodist antiquity, the first who puts the name into print. His one and only reference to the room in our Court belongs to 1736, two years before Wesley's conversion, and is not in any way connected by him with Wesley. In Walter Wilson's "History and Antiquities of Dissenting Churches in London," is a positive assertion, the only one I believe of any early and original worth. His work was published in 1810, and his assertion has not escaped the notice of some Methodist students, at least. A good eyesight, especially if aided by a glass, may discover a little to the north of the opening of Little Britain, the graphically presented ridge-like roof of some old monastic buildings, long since removed. These are Trinity Hall, which at the date we are interested in, was the meeting-place of a congregation of Nonjurors. Here very definitely does Wilson place Wesley's visits of 24th May and 20th September. But Wilson makes some evident mistakes in his paragraphs,* and is, I find, believed to be no great authority beyond his special field, the old Dissenting causes of the metropolis, for whose history he had very exceptional resources and qualifications. One is sorry to part with such a confident guide, but, on the whole, it seems as if he has only hazarded a conjecture; knowing that in 1738 there was a religious meeting held in Trinity Hall, and that Wesley was converted in "a society meeting" in Aldersgate Street; and perhaps also knowing nothing of Hutton's room in Nettleton Court. Whether before Benham's notice in 1856 there was in Methodist circles any traditional knowledge of Nettleton Court, I cannot ascertain with anything like definiteness. Mr. G. J. Stevenson joined Mr. Lupton in his researches upon this matter. He simply says in his "Wesley

* For example, speaking of the chapel at 32, Fetter Lane, he says: "[Mr. Rawlin's] old chapel was taken possession of by Mr. John Wesley, *who formed his first society there* on May 1, 1738."

Family," "A court in Aldersgate Street," and this only in 1876. But, as I suspected, Mr. Lupton definitely tells me it was Benham's notice which suggested Nettleton Court to Stevenson and himself; that, and nothing more. The identification may, nevertheless, be right. If Hutton were still "running" his room in 1738, then, excluding Trinity Hall, and supposing that no other "society" were meeting in Aldersgate Street, it may be that Wesley did go there with his friend. It was, of course, Hutton's room, not a Moravian room, even if, as a well-informed correspondent believes, one William Holland were the reader of Luther's Preface. Holland was a remarkable man, the first Congregation elder at Fetter Lane, "a painter in a large way of business in Basinghall Street, over against Blackwell Hall, near the Guildhall." I owe to Mr. Seymour Cooper the sight and use—as, I find, the Rev. T. McCullagh had before me many years ago—of a precious MS. by William Holland, preserved in the archives, and giving, probably to Zinzendorf, an account of the beginnings of the work in England. From this we learn that Luther had marvellously helped Holland himself exactly a week before. Here is his own account of what Charles Wesley has chronicled more briefly in his Journal under 17th May. "Shortly before Peter Böhler's departure for Georgia, he and Mr. Wesley began a band. I was gone at that time for a few days into the country. After my return, in speaking with one of our society on the doctrine of Christ, as preached by him, and reading the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, I was conscious that I was not in the state there described. I became very uneasy, made a diligent search for books treating of faith in Christ, and was providentially directed to Martin Luther's 'Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians.' I carried it round to Mr. Charles Wesley, who was then sick at Mr. Bray's, as a very precious treasure that I had found, and we three sat down together, Mr. C. Wesley reading the Preface aloud. At the words, 'What, have we then nothing to do! No, nothing! but only accept of Him! who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption'; there came such a power over me as I cannot well describe; my great burden fell off in an instant; my heart was so filled with peace and love that I burst into tears. I almost thought I saw our Saviour! My companions, perceiving me so affected, fell on their knees and

prayed. When I afterwards went into the street, I could scarcely feel the ground I trod upon. I was blind to the scenes, deaf to the noises, around me."

Holland was in many ways a man of mark amongst the early Fetter Lane people, and only left them when in 1747 he found that the inevitable drift of events was making it impracticable to be called a Moravian brother without separating from the National Church and her thirty-nine Articles. (Benham, p. 153.) He was, in fact, a Moravian "old planner" half a century before the "Old Planners" of Methodism.

Before we put away our map, we must see Bull and Mouth Street, entering St. Martin's-le-Grand just within Aldersgate itself, and in it a "Quakers' Meeting." Wesley tried this as a preaching place from 10th Oct., 1756, but gave it up as "a barren, uncomfortable place," on 21st Dec., 1763. The new buildings of the Post Office have swallowed up street and meeting.

HENRY J. FOSTER.

# Wesley and the Moravians.

FOR rather more than five years Wesley was in close and frequent communication with the Moravians, and from them he appears to have learnt some lessons which stood him in good stead when it became necessary to organise and administer his Societies. The Moravians themselves have a great and famous ancestry. Their origin may be traced back to the religious movements in Bohemia, which both preceded and were quickened by the martyrdom of John Hus. For years before 1457, pious men, who called themselves Brethren, had gathered in quiet meetings for the worship of God, and had helped one another with prayer and counsel. In that year they were bound together into a community under the title of the Unitas Fratrum, and ten years later they separated themselves from the National Church of Bohemia. By the early part of the next century they had grown into four hundred congregations scattered through the three provinces of Bohemia, Moravia, and Poland. Each province was under the control of its own bishops and synods, whilst formal unity was preserved by the occasional meeting of a general synod, invested with supreme administrative power. In formal belief the Brethren differed little from their neighbours, though they singled out different parts of the common faith for emphasis. In practice they refrained from the recognition of official titles and distinctions, resorted to the lot for guidance in their more serious perplexities, and, whilst not professing communism, they required that Christians should live as nearly as possible in what they imagined to have been the rule of the apostolic community at Jerusalem.

In the disturbances that accompanied the Jesuit anti-Reformation, the Protestantism of Bohemia was practically stamped out, and by 1627 had ceased to exist in any organised form. In Poland, about

the same time, the Brethren were absorbed in the Reformed Church of that country. Even in Moravia only a few families retained the faith of their fathers, and held their private meetings for worship in constant fear of interference and persecution. At length, in 1722, the decision was taken to forsake their native country, and to seek a place where their rights of conscience would be respected. In the course of a few years several bands settled by invitation on the estate of Count Zinzendorf, in Saxony, where they built the little town of Herrnhut. Zinzendorf himself was a Lutheran of pietist tendencies, who seems to have designed to establish a society, distinct from, whilst intermingling with, the Churches, and devoted to good works. The scheme may be regarded as brought to a head in 1727, when a coalition took place between the Lutheran hosts and the Moravian settlers, and the Unitas Fratrum was re-established as a community worshipping at the Lutheran parish church, but carrying on pastoral and missionary work in ways of its own. Outside Germany, in the English and the American provinces, the Moravians must be regarded as forming a distinct and independent Church; but the Brethren still preserve in the country of their adoption a peculiar and undefined relation to the Lutherans, which enables them to continue their earnest evangelistic efforts without incurring the suspicion of the ecclesiastical authorities or the charge of proselytism.

Wesley appears to have come into contact with the Moravians for the first time in the autumn of 1735, in the course of his voyage to Georgia as a missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. On board was also a small group of Moravian agents, under the direction of their bishop, Nitschmann, a converted carpenter, described by a man who knew him as winning respect by the simplicity of his demeanour and the genuineness of his religion. The two companies of evangelists quickly drew towards one another. Each began to learn the language of the other, and acquaintanceship ripened into intimacy. Wesley joined in the religious exercises of the Germans, and the Germans welcomed his counsel and presence. He writes of "the great seriousness of their behaviour," and adds, "Of their humility they had given a continual proof by performing those servile offices for the other passengers which none of the English would undertake. . . . Every day had given them occasion of showing

a meekness which no injury could move. If they were pushed, struck, or thrown down, they rose again and went away; but no complaint was found in their mouth." Arrived in Georgia, the Moravians were met by Spangenberg, who had preceded them in order to make arrangements for their permanent settlement in the colony, whilst, at the same time, carrying out his own intention of preaching the Gospel to the Indians.

With Nitschmann and Spangenberg, Wesley's friendship became close, and even to some extent formative. The object of the former was to complete the ecclesiastical organisation of the little colony, and to return to his duties in Europe. Wesley was present as a spectator at the more important of the proceedings, and wrote, "After several hours spent in conference and prayer, they proceeded to the election and ordination of a bishop. The great simplicity, as well as solemnity, of the whole almost made me forget the seventeen hundred years between, and imagine myself in one of those assemblies where form and state were not, but Paul the tent-maker, or Peter the fisherman, presided, yet with the demonstration of the Spirit and of power." Evidently some of the elements of the high-churchmanship with which Wesley left England were beginning to fuse. On one occasion he spent some days in the home of his friends, where he says he had "an opportunity, day by day, of observing their whole behaviour. . . . They were always employed, always cheerful themselves, and in good humour with one another; they had put away all anger, and strife, and wrath, and bitterness, and clamour, and evil-speaking; they walked worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called, and adorned the Gospel of our Lord in all things." When Wesley returned home, he came to the conclusion that though he had gone to America to convert others, he had never been truly converted himself. From the disappointment and comparative failure of his mission, and especially from intercourse with the godly Moravians, he had learnt that salvation was by faith; he had not yet learnt what saving faith really was. To serve God and to obey Him had long been his desire: "The faith I want is," so he wrote, "a sure trust and confidence in God, that, through the merits of Christ, my sins are forgiven, and I reconciled to the favour of God."

For this assurance Wesley had not long to wait. He landed at Deal on the first of February, 1738, and at once renewed his friendship with

James Hutton, a printer and publisher, who had established in Nettleton Court, Aldersgate Street, one of the many societies which at that time began to spring up under undenominational control for the purposes of mutual religious edification. Hutton was a Churchman in sympathy with the Moravians, and gradually became a Moravian, with happy but unsatisfying memories of his previous churchmanship. Wesley had long been intimately acquainted with him, and, largely under his influence, frequented the meetings, both Moravian and private, which he supported or directed. In this way Wesley was brought to know Peter Böhler, a Moravian agent, passing through England on his way to join the settlement in Georgia, "by whom (he writes) in the hand of the great God, I was, on March 5, fully convinced of the want of that faith whereby alone we are saved." In May the little society, of which Wesley was now a recognised member, was transferred in part to 32, Fetter Lane, and a series of "fundamental rules" was drawn up "in obedience to the command of God by St. James, and by the advice of Peter Bohler." The rules were thirty-three in number, and are given in detail in Benham's "Memoirs of James Hutton." Wesley records only eleven, and the omission may reasonably be taken as a sign of the critical attitude which he consistently maintained towards his Moravian associates. He was willing to worship with them, to learn from them, to join them in any good work, but it is doubtful whether he ever entirely submitted himself to their discipline. The assurance for which he longed did not come to him at one of their recognised meetings, but on common ground in Nettleton Court, "where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. I felt my heart strangely warmed," he continues, "I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."

The following month Wesley set out with his friend, Benjamin Ingham, on a visit to the Moravian headquarters in Germany. He was pleased with much that he heard and saw; but signs began to appear of a serious breach between himself and his friends. At Marienborn Ingham was permitted to partake of the Holy Communion, but the privilege is said (by Benham, "Memoirs of James Hutton," on alleged authority of high value) to have been refused to Wesley, the congregation judging him to be "*homo perturbatus*, and that his head had gained

an ascendency over his heart, and being desirous not to interfere with his plan of effecting good as a clergyman of the English Church." Wesley, in his Journal, reports merely that he was so ill as to be "forced to lie down the rest of the day"; but there can be no doubt that the Moravians were not disposed to welcome with open arms a spirit so critical, eclectic, and masterful as his.

After his return to England in the autumn, Wesley continued to attend the meetings of the Moravians, and even occasionally to preside over them, but, according to Benham, the breach between the two must have been steadily widening. An interesting glimpse of the friendship between Charles Wesley and the Moravians is afforded by a document, for the knowledge of which we are indebted to the kindness and antiquarian zeal of Mr. Thursfield Smith, of Whitchurch. On a day in 1739, Charles Wesley wished to preach on Kennington Common, and to reach his destination, took the nearest way across an open field. The result was a prosecution by the owner of the field for trespass; and when the case was tried on July 29th, Wesley was cast in damages of £10, with taxed costs of £9 16s. Appeal seems to have been considered hopeless, for the document in question reads—

"Goter *versus* Wesley.

"Received of Mr. Wesley, by the hand of Joseph Verding, nineteen pounds and sixteen shillings damages and costs in this case.

"Wm. Gason,
"Attorney for the Plaintiff."

On July 20, 1740, John Wesley formally withdrew from the Society at Fetter Lane, which had become by that date almost entirely Moravian in its constituents. Two divergent accounts of the incident have been preserved. Wesley himself states, in his Journal, that after remaining silent during the ordinary proceedings of the meeting, he read a paper in which the members were charged with holding that there is no such thing as weak faith, that a man ought not to use the means of grace before he has such a faith as excludes all doubt and fear, that "to search the Scriptures, to pray, or to communicate, before we have this faith, is to seek salvation by works." The paper concluded dramatically, "As I find you more and more confirmed in the error of your ways, nothing now remains but that I should give you up to God. You that

are of the same judgment, follow me." Eighteen or nineteen are reported to have followed him; these were joined two or three days later by more; and the seceding members were attached to the society meeting at the Foundery, and established by Wesley on the last Thursday of the year preceding.

Of the other account of this incident there are two versions. Molther, one of the leaders of the Moravians, was on a visit to London at or about the time, and wrote: "In 1740 John Wesley attacked the Society with a view of confounding it. But, as most of the members loved the doctrine of our Saviour and the atonement in His blood, his efforts remained fruitless, and perceiving his object to be foiled, he separated from the society, exclaiming, 'Whoever belongs to the Lord, come with me.' A few followed him." James Hutton wrote more personally and bitterly, "Wesley, displeased at not being thought so much of as formerly, and offended, as he said, with the easy way of salvation as taught by the Brethren, publicly spoke against our doctrine in his sermons, and his friends did the same. In June, 1740 (the date is wrong; see above) he formed his Foundery Society in opposition to the one which met at Fetter Lane. Many of our usual hearers consequently left us, especially the females. We asked his forgiveness if in anything we had aggrieved him, but he continued full of wrath, accusing the Brethren that, in following Luther without discrimination, they, by dwelling exclusively on the doctrine of faith, neglected the law and zeal for sanctification. In short, he became our declared opponent, and the two Societies of the Brethren and the Methodists thenceforward were separated and became independent of each other." Hutton was evidently smarting under what he considered a heavy blow at the movement he was fostering; but amongst the Brethren at Fetter Lane antinomian tendencies had for some time been spreading. These Wesley disliked, and not improbably intended to deal with peremptorily. The breach between the two Societies was never healed. In 1745, and again in 1749, a Declaration drawn up by Zinzendorf three years before the earlier date was published in a modified form by the Brethren in the public Press, and any connection of the Moravians with the Methodists was disowned. It may be doubted whether so much good work would have been done by the two Churches had they at so early a stage of their career in this country been merged into one.

Wesley rendered valuable assistance to the Moravians in their attempts to gain a footing here; from some of them he learnt the necessity, and from others the perils of faith. The simplicity of their lives and ritual helped him to distinguish what is indspensable in the Gospel from what is superfluous in the practice of its believers. And the regulations by which the Moravian and other Societies were controlled and bound together suggested many a hint of which Wesley made good use when Providence called upon him to establish the United Society as a separate organisation for the proclamation of Christ to the world.

A little batch of letters from Mr. Thursfield Smith's great collection shows the familiar and helpful terms on which Wesley lived with the Moravian leaders up to six months before he separated from them. The letters represent what appears to be part of a collection of four letters addressed by various correspondents to Telschig, and sent on to John Wesley at Bristol with a letter from James Hutton. They were endorsed by Wesley "J. Hn. and Molther, Jan. 25, 1740."

Molther is well-known from the notices of him in the Journal. He was an execrable writer, as the almost undecipherable fragment of his letter shows. After a broken sentence, it proceeds:—

"I expect you at the Sacrament. Be sure that you are here before Thursday. From your wife I have not yet heard. The work of the Saviour goes on well here; blessed be the day of grace. With greetings from me for thy good soul that are beyond expression,

"Thy poor brother,

"MOLTHER."

The other letters are comparatively free from difficulty:—

"MY DEAR TELSCHIG,—Thou knowest that I love thee, and I know well that I have not in my heart anything that is good. The Saviour gives me power over all my thoughts. His righteousness is enough for me.

"I am, thy brother, with kind regards, poor and nothing,

"J. E. HUTTON."

"DEAR JOHN WESLEY,—I love you, my dear brother, and wish you what I wish for myself. Access to the prisoners has been denied me. I have showed Mr. Crouch your letter, and desired him to procure a list and meeting of those that manage the Foundery. I desire you will send me word what day Charles sets out; comes he through Oxford? What day will he be there? What day in London? I think to go some way and meet him. Kiss him, and take a kiss yourself. Mr. Morgan, the minister, and his wife are here; they stay about a fortnight. My love to all.

"Yr.

"JAS. HUTTON.

"Oxlee and Simpson are gone to Nottingham."

"MY DEAR BROTHER TELSCHIG,—I greet thee and kiss thy hands; you may be assured that I hold thee dear. Since you left I have been miserable beyond expression, and I don't know what the Saviour will do with me. I am much plagued with my old habits and my old abominations; desire and sin are always coming afresh into my thoughts. I fear they are not yet out of my heart. I am afraid my fellowship with the Saviour is hypocritical, and I don't know what to say.

"I am, thy poor unworthy brother,

"JOS. VERDING.

"P.S.—Greet in my name all the brethren, and especially John and Charles Wesley."

Both Telschig and Verding were Moravians. To the latter's association with Charles Wesley reference has already been made. He afterwards settled with his wife in Yorkshire, where the names of both appear on the roll of a Moravian congregation near Halifax. Telschig is probably the Telchig whom Wesley consulted on religious matters on May 26, 1738, and who accompanied him in his visit to Germany. John Nelson found him also in Yorkshire, exercising great influence amongst the Moravians, in whose books his name is more correctly spelt.

R. WADDY MOSS.

# Wesley's First "Plan" for London.

THE places at the head of this Plan are The Foundery, Spitalfields, Snowsfields, Wapping, Sadler's Wells, West Street Chapel, and Westminster.

The Foundery was Wesley's headquarters from November, 1739, till the "New Chapel" was opened in City Road on November 1, 1778. Wesley spent his last night in the preacher's house at the Foundery, on August 8, 1779, looking back with wonder at what God had wrought there during one-and-forty years. The place was sub-let to a Mr. Jones, but the stewards at City Road were responsible for the rent till their lease expired. The Rev. James Creighton, one of the clergymen who read prayers at City Road, lay sick there in November, 1785, when the rain poured through the roof and broke the ceiling of his room. Spitalfields was the Huguenot Chapel in Grey Eagle Street. On Wednesday, February 21, 1750, Wesley says, "I preached in the Old French Church, in Grey Eagle Street, Spitalfields. It was extremely full, and many of the hearers were greatly moved: But who will endure to the end?" The place became very precious to Wesley. His services there were times of special blessing, and he had glorious Sacramental services. Here Wesley had his first Covenant Service on August 11, 1755. "After I had recited the tenour of the Covenant proposed, in the words of that blessed man, Richard Alleine, all the people stood up, in testimony of assent, to the number of about eighteen hundred persons. Such a night I scarce ever saw before. Surely the fruit of it shall remain for ever." It became the Covenant Chapel for the London Society, and retained this honour until the New Chapel was built. "At length," says Wesley, "we have a house capable of containing the whole Society."

A letter to the stewards of the Foundery shows how Wesley felt the importance of the work in Spitalfields:

"Pembroke, August 6, 1768.

"My dear Brethren,—The thing you mention is of no small concern, and ought not to be determined hastily. Indeed, it would be easy to answer, if we considered only how to save money: but we are to consider also how to save souls. Now, I doubt whether we should act wisely in this respect were we to give up the chapel in Spitalfields. We have no other preaching-place in or near that populous quarter of the town; and a quarter which, upon one account, I prefer before almost any other; namely, that the people in general are more simple, and less confused by any other preachers. I think, therefore, it would not be well to give up this, if we could gain a thousand pounds thereby. I should look upon it as selling the souls of men for money: which God will give us in due time without this. That many who live near the Foundery would be glad of it, I allow, because it would save them trouble. But neither can I put the saving of trouble in competition with the saving of souls."

Snowsfields Chapel was built by Mrs. Ginns as a preaching-place for Sayer Rudd, a London physician and preacher, who was compelled to leave the Devonshire Square Meeting-House on account of his heretical views. An influential part of his congregation went with him to Snowsfields. On Mrs. Rudd's death, in 1742, he became a clergyman, and received the living at Walmer. Wesley says in his Journal for August 6, 1743: "A convenient chapel was offered me at Snowsfields, on the other side of the water. It was built on purpose, it seems, by a poor Arian misbeliever, for the defence and propagation of her bad faith. But the wisdom of God brought that device to nought; and ordered, by His over-ruling Providence, that it should be employed, not for 'crucifying the Son of God afresh,' but for calling all to believe on His name."

Wesley paid occasional visits to Wapping before he had any foothold in the region. On August 2, 1741, he went "after having been long importuned by Dr. Deleznot, to the chapel in Great Hermitage Street, Wapping. Mr. Meriton (a clergyman from the Isle of Man)

read prayers. I then preached on the words in the former lesson, 'Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself? Because he hath humbled himself, I will not bring this evil in his days;' and took occasion thence to exhort all unbelievers to use the grace God had already given them; and in keeping His Law, according to the power they now had, to wait for the faith of the Gospel." Next month, on Sunday, September 13, 1741, Wesley met about two hundred persons, with whom he had talked severally the week before, at the French Chapel, where "they gladly joined in the service of the Church, and particularly in the Lord's Supper, at which Mr. Hall assisted." The place held two hundred, and on five successive Sundays Wesley was able to arrange to have the Lord's Supper with the whole of the London Society, which then numbered one thousand members. Next March he says, "I preached for the last time in the French Chapel at Wapping on 'If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed.'" On February 6, 1764, Wesley opened the new chapel at Wapping, "Well filled with deeply-attentive hearers." The work prospered. On March 20, 1771, he says, "We never, that I remember, had such a congregation at Wapping, either of hearers or communicants; and very seldom such an outpouring of the Spirit."

Sadler's Wells, or the Islington Spa, was sometimes described as New Tunbridge Wells. The chalybeate spring there was discovered in 1683 by Mr. Sadler, surveyor of the highways, in the well-wooded garden of a music-house that he had just opened. The well soon became famous, and in June, 1733, the Princesses Amelia and Caroline took the waters there daily. The proprietor reaped a harvest of some £30 each morning. The theatre here was famous for its pantomimes and entertainments, and in 1757 a horse patrol was sent to protect visitors on their way back to town. The place was close to the New River, and at a later stage in its history assumed the character of an aquatic theatre. Till 1765, when a brick building was erected, Sadler's Wells was a wooden house. The amusements were probably held in the open air at the time that Wesley first preached in the theatre. On Monday, April 29, 1754, he says, "I preached at Sadler's Wells, in what was formerly a play-house. I am glad when it pleases God to take possession of what Satan esteemed his own ground. The place, though large, was extremely crowded; and deep attention sat

on every face." On November 10, 1755, he was there again. "I preached at the Wells: and I did not wonder that God gave an uncommon blessing to those who then assembled in His name, considering the difficulties they had broke through. The frost was very severe, accompanied with such a fog as perhaps the oldest man there never saw before. The lamps could not be seen across the street, and hardly the ground, by those who had lights in their hands. Many lost their way when they were just at their own doors. And it was almost as hard to breathe as to see. How easy is it for God to punish a sinful nation, without employing an arm of flesh."

West Street Chapel had been built in February, 1700, for a Huguenot congregation which had previously worshipped at Weld House and at Newport Market. It passed into Wesley's hands in May, 1743, and continued to be the headquarters of Methodism in West London till 1798, when Dr. Franklin's Episcopal Chapel in Great Queen Street was purchased. The Sacramental cups of the Huguenot Church are still used at Great Queen Street, and West Street Chapel itself is left as a link to the days of the Wesleys and Whitefield and Fletcher.

Before West Street was opened, there had been a preaching place for some time near Drury Lane. Wesley says, on October 20, 1740: "I began declaring that 'Gospel of Christ' which 'is the power of God unto salvation,' in the midst of the publicans and sinners, at Short's Gardens, Drury Lane." This narrow street runs between Drury Lane and Neal Street, a few yards south of Broad Street. The Rev. J. W. Horsley has shown by his study of the writing on prison walls ("Sunday Magazine," 1866, p. 171) that it is still one of the chief resorts of "publicans and sinners." The service held on Friday evenings in this upper room was the forerunner of the West Street Friday evening service. Here, on April 10, 1741, when Wesley began to expound the eighth chapter of Romans, "thoughts and words crowded in so fast" upon him that he "could get no farther than the first verse"; nor, indeed, than that single clause, "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." "Five days before Joseph Humphreys, who had begun to preach in connection with Wesley, wrote to say that he had been reading the latter part of this chapter, of which he gave a Calvinistic explanation. This led to Wesley's choice of subject.

Humphreys heard his exposition, but was not satisfied with it, and next month cast in his lot with Mr. Whitefield." The next Friday found Wesley there again. He was so unwell that he could "scarcely get out of bed," and had to lie down almost as soon as he got up. He "made shift to drag himself" to Short's Gardens, where he had much difficulty in climbing up the stairs, and though his voice was almost gone, he gave out his text. "In a moment both voice and strength returned"; and for some weeks he enjoyed such vigour as he had not known since his "landing in America." On Friday, January 22, 1742, he "met the society" here "for the first time." The position of the upper room is not known, but it perhaps stood on part of the site occupied by one of the churches of the district.

The Westminster room was in Peter Street, close to our present Training College. On Thursday, September 16, 1756, Wesley says, "I walked over to Bishop Bonner's" (that is a house in which he had lived at Hackney) "and preached to a large and serious congregation. I found some faintness, the sun being extremely hot; but more in walking from thence to Westminster, where I preached at seven." It was on Thursday (April 28, 1763), whilst he was at Westminster, where he had appointed to preach, that word was brought him about five in the afternoon that Mr. Maxfield would not preach at the Foundery. "So the breach is made; but I am clear, I have done all I possibly could to prevent it. I walked immediately away, and preached myself, on 'If I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.'" The defection of one of his first Bristol converts and first lay preacher distressed him deeply. About 170 of the London members cast in their lot with Maxfield and George Bell, and Wesley says that he had to spend some days in visiting the society, and settling the minds of those who had been confused by a thousand misrepresentations. "My point was still to go straight forward in the work whereto I am called."

It is interesting to find that the collections for Conference expenses on August 5, 1792, were: New Chapel, £51 14s. 11d.; West Street, £15 13s. 10d.; Spitalfields, £4 1s. 6½d.; Snowsfields, £2 11s.; Wapping, £1 14s.

JOHN TELFORD.

# John Wesley as a Letter Writer.

JOHN WESLEY was a many-sided man. He excelled in many lines. But it is as a Letter Writer we think of him now. He lived in a day when letter writing had not become an almost lost art. Postage was dear, travelling communication was scanty, newspapers were scarce; so that men and women who wrote letters wrote long ones; and the friendly correspondence of the seventeenth and eighteenth century is a rich storehouse for the historians, literati, and readers of to-day.

John Wesley wrote an enormous number of letters. They are to be found in libraries and museums, in Universities and Colleges in many lands; hundreds of them are in private houses, framed and hung up in vestries, and prized by people whose forefathers received or secured them. At the Book Room and in other Connexional custody there is a priceless treasure of Wesley letters. I myself could put my hand on thousands in public and private custody. Most of Wesley's letters are brief, written on half-pages of paper. Some, of course, are lengthy. The short ones often relate to the work of preachers; circuit matters; conduct and behaviour of people; and to the religious experience of converts and members of the society who had written to him.

His letters were often incisive and very frank. Many of them must have made unsatisfactory preachers wince; and some preachers' wives who kept and left dirty houses, and whom he did not hesitate to call "sluts," must have had strong private opinions about the interference of "our venerable Founder" in matters domestic. On the other hand, his letters greatly commended the earnest, spiritual, simple-hearted men and women who walked worthy of their vocation.

John Wesley must have paid much for postage. Many of his letters are marked "prepaid." A letter often cost tenpence in those days. Some of his letters—a very small proportion—were "franked" by peers

or Members of Parliament, and so were carried and delivered post-free. In this respect, however, John Wesley was not so astute and worldly-wise as his brother Charles. Charles Wesley obtained a great many franks. He was much keener in money matters than his great brother.

Perhaps the best illustrator of John Wesley as a Letter Writer is John Wesley himself; and my better plan will be to let his letters speak.

Everyone who knows his history knows that his matrimonial life was not a happy one. There are some letters in my possession that deal with this episode. They were advertised for sale by auction a few years ago, and knocked down to me at a high price. The representatives of national and public libraries ceased to bid when they found that their competitor was the Book Steward of the Wesleyan Conference; but some person from the country ran the price up beyond the value except to the Conference. Since then I have secured as my own private purchase a considerable number of letters sent for auction.

The special letters addressed to his wife are as follows:—

"To Mrs. Wesley,
"In Threadneedle Street,
"London.

"Tetsworth,
"42 Miles from London,
"March 23, 1751.

"My dear Molly,—Do I write too soon? Have not you above all the People in the World a Right to hear from me as soon as possibly I can? You have surely a Right to every Proof of Love I can give, and to all the little Help which is in my power. For you have given me even your own Self. O how can we praise God enough, for making us Helps meet for each other! I am utterly astonished at His Goodness. Let not only our Lips but our Lives shew forth His Praise!

"Will you be so kind as to send word to F. Butts, That Mr. Williams, of Bristol, will draw upon him in a few days, for twenty pounds (wch I paid Rd. Thyer in full!) and that he may call upon you for the money?

"If any letter comes to you, directed to Ye Revd. Mr. John Wesley, open it: It is for yourself.

"Dear Love, Adieu!"

The preceding, like many of his letters, is without signature or initials, but is undoubtedly genuine.

The next in the collection is addressed :—

"To Mrs. Wesley,
"At the Foundery,
"London.

"Norwich,
"Dec. 23, 1758.

"DEAR MOLLY,—I was much concerned ye night before I left London at your unkind and unjust accusation. You accused me of Unkindness, Cruelty, and what not? And why so? Because I insist on chusing my own company! Because I insist upon conversing, by speaking or Writing, with those whom I (not you) judge proper. For more than seven years this has been a Bone of Contention betwn you and me, and it is so still: For I will not, I can not, I dare not give it up. But then you 'will rage and fret and call me names': I am sorry for it: But I cannot help it. I still do and must insist, That I have a Right to chuse my own company. Then you will 'denounce against me all ye curses from Genesis to the Revelation.' You may so: But you gain no ground hereby: For still I cannot give up my right. Nay, but you 'will say all manner of Evil of me.' Be it so: But still I stand just where I was. Then you will 'show my private letters to all the world.' If you do, I must assert my Right still. All this will not extort it from me: Nor anything else wch you can do. You may, therefore, as well allow it now as after we have squabbled about it (if we live so long) seven years longer. For it is my Right by all ye Laws of God and Man, and by a Right wch I never can part with. O do not continue to trouble yourself and me, and to disturb the Children of God by still grasping at a Power wch must be denied you, by Him who is nevertheless

"Your truly affectionate Husband,
"JOHN WESLEY."

The third of this unique set of letters from husband to wife is dated, but without name of place where it was written:

"Sept. 1, 1777.

"MY DEAR,—I sincerely wish a Reunion with you, if it could be upon Good terms. Otherwise it would not continue; and this ye last

error wd be worse than the first. But what are those terms on wch it probably wou'd continue? In order to know, we must state ye case, wch I will do as briefly as I can, leaving out all unnecessary circumstances.

"Some years since without my Consent or knowledge, you left me and settled at Newcastle. I received you again without any terms, nay without any acknowledgment that you had done wrong.

"Two years ago you left me again, without my Consent or knowledge.

"A few days since I met you and (to my great surprise) found you willing to return. I was willing to receive you upon these terms, 1. Restore my Papers, 2. Promise to take no more.

"But upon reflection, I see I was too hasty. For you have given copies of my Papers, and these you cannot recall. Likewise you have spoken all manner of evil against me, particularly to my Enemies and ye enemies of ye Cause I live to support. Hereby many bad men have triumphed, been confirmed in their evil ways: and many Good but weak men have been stumbled and some have drawn back to perdition. A sword has been put into ye hands of ye enemies of God, and ye children of God have been armed against one another.

"Things standing thus, if I was to receive you just now without any acknowledgment or reparation of these wrongs, it wd be esteemed by all reasonable men a Confirmation of all you have said.

"It may be asked 'What Reparation are you either able or willing to make?' I know not if you are willing to make any. If you are, what reparation are you able to make? Very little indeed, for the water is spilled and cannot be gathered up again.

"All you can do now, if you are ever so willing, is to Unsay what you have said. For instance, you have said over and over, That I have lived in adultery these Twenty Years. Do you believe this or do you not? If you do, how can you think of living with such a Monster? If you do not, give it me under your hand. Is not this the least that you can do?"

It is evident from his letters to personal friends and acquaintances that he kept in close touch with his people. The following is a sample of hundreds of letters:

"Lambeth, Nov. 13, 1788.

"To Mrs. Crosby.

"My dear Sister,—I thank you for your account of the death of Mrs. Corkle, which is highly remarkable. It ought not to be hid under a bushel, so I shall order it to be inserted in the Magazine.

"It is very remarkable that as Bro. Peacock has been growing in Grace for some years, so God has been increasing his Gifts, and has been giving him more and more favour among the people to whom he was sent. I know no reason why he may not spend another year at Leeds.

"I have been more particularly Rheumatical within these few months than I had for forty years before. And in September my Strength swiftly decayed. But it has pleased God now to restore it, and I am nearly as I was twenty years ago. Probably if I live, I shall see you at Leeds in Summer. Peace be with all your Spirit!—I am, my dear Sister, Your ever affectionate Brother,

"John Wesley."

The Benevolent or Strangers' Friend Society was founded in 1785 by a few good people. Its first six members were John and Margaret Gardner, Thomas and Mary Float, and William and Ann Biddles. Like a true Methodist, John Gardner wrote John Wesley and told him of the proposal to give a penny a week each to be "carried on the Sabbath by one of ourselves who read and pray with the afflicted, who (according to the Rules) must be a poor stranger having no parish nor friend at hand to help them." This Benevolent plan was opposed by Mr. P——, the class leader of these people, therefore they appealed to John Wesley. They had "neither box nor book," and their "whole stock was not yet twenty shillings." That was the start of a great and useful charity. Wesley wrote in reply to the appeal:

"Highbury Place, Dec. 21, 1785.

"My dear Brother,—I like the design and Rules of your little Society, and hope you will do good to many. I will subscribe three pence per week, and will give a Guinea in advance if you call on me Saturday morning.—I am, Your affec. Brother,

"J. Wesley.

"To Mr. John Gardner."

That "grain of mustard" has grown to a large tree; and the Strangers' Friend Society still does "good to many" and well deserves support.

The Chapel in City Road was very precious to John Wesley. Those who have been interested in clearing it of its heavy debt in recent years, will be glad to read the Founder's letter when it was about to be built:

"Oct. 18, 1776.

"My dear Brother,—The Society at London have given attention to their Brethren in various parts of England. They have done this for upwards of thirty years. They have done it cheerfully and liberally. The first year of the Subscription for the General Debt, they subscribed above *Nine Hundred Pounds;* the next, above *three hundred;* and not much less every one of the ensuing years.

"They now stand in need of assistance themselves. They are under a necessity of building: as the Foundery, with all the adjoining houses, is shortly to be pulled down. And the City of London has granted ground to build on: but on condition of covering it. And with large Houses in front, which, together with the New Chapel, will in a very moderate computation, cost upwards of *Six Thousand Pounds.* I must, therefore, beg the assistance of all our brethren. *Now* help the *Parent* Society, which has helped others for so many years, so willingly and so largely. Now help Me, who account this as a kindness done to myself; perhaps the last of this sort I shall ask of you. Subscribe what you conveniently can, to be paid either now, or at Christmas, or at Lady Day next,—I am, your affectionate Brother,

"John Wesley."

The Trustees are:—

John Duplex,
Charles Greenwood,
Richard Kemp,
Samuel Chancellor,
Charles Wheeler,
William Gowland,
John Folgham.

John Wesley had a closer, more paternal, and more cordial relation with the preachers than had Charles Wesley. The latter and his family had an aloofness that the greater brother never had. John

Wesley did not hesitate by pen or voice to set his brother right in cases of difficulty or dispute. That the preachers knew. The following characteristic letter (addressed to Mr. Atlay, the Book Steward) illustrates this, and is very interesting, when it is remembered that Charles Wesley wrote very bitterly about Dr. Coke, especially touching his ordination as Bishop or Superintendent by John Wesley. The letter also shows his attention to details:

"Chester, April 15, 1788.

"My dear Brother,—My Brother never knew the value of Dr. Coke while he lived. I wish I had an hundred Preachers like him. If you expected me to die within the year, you should not have printed so large editions. For you know not who will buy them when I am gone. While we live let us live in earnest. I have little fear for Sally; much hope for Charles (to whom I wrote lately), and some for Sammy. He certainly fears God. I *must* have the Tunes printed as soon as may be. If the corrected copy is lost, they must be printed from the large copy, but the price must be only two shillings and sixpence. Pray consult with T. Olivers when the additional Sermons may be most properly executed. I have another ready for the Press and two more begun.—I am, your affectionate Brother,

"J. Wesley."

A last word. As a Letter Writer John Wesley was prolific, newsy, faithful, often learned, always interesting; but there is a great advantage to the readers of his letters in the fact that he wrote legibly. His handwriting is beautiful, so is that of Charles Wesley. He did not waste the time of his correspondents by sending letters almost undecipherable. He did not expose himself to the risk of having his letters left unread, or thrown into the fire or waste-paper basket because of atrocious caligraphy, like some of his followers.

The letters published in book shape deserve the perusal and study of people who wish to know the man, his work, and the history of his times. Some day, probably, the Church, Methodism, and the world may be enriched by the publication of many more letters of Wesley—one of the best Letter Writers of his century.

Charles H. Kelly.

# Three Wesley Letters.

THE late Dr. Osborn enjoyed special opportunities of learning facts concerning Wesley's later life. Shortly before his death he told the Editor of the *Recorder* that, as a young man, he lived in the house with Henry Moore. He it was who, on a review day in Hyde Park, pointed to the Duke of Wellington, at the moment dismounted—a little man standing by his horse—and said, "That's the image of John Wesley." Once, at a dinner party, George Osborn sat next to Miss Wesley ("Sally," only surviving daughter of Charles Wesley), and was not a little alarmed when the quaintly-dressed old lady began, at table, to cast off a succession of outer garments of a fashion unfamiliar to the early years of the last century.

Large quantities of books and documents not greatly prized half a century ago in this country, were at one time in his possession. These, as he told the writer, passed, for the most part, to the United States, as did the treasures once in the possession of Adam Clarke and G. J. Stevenson. Dr. Osborn's eldest son, the Rev. George R. Osborn, has very kindly supplied us with three deeply-interesting letters, two of which are copied in his father's handwriting. They have not, we understand, hitherto been published.

The first letter is addressed to "Miss Bolton, In Witney, Oxfordshire." This, no doubt, is the Miss B. referred to in the following note from the Journal: "Thursday, Oct. 15, 1778. I preached at Witney. Since Nancy B[olton] has been detained here, the work of God has greatly revived. Mysterious Providence! that one capable of being so extremely useful should be thus shut up in a corner!"

"London, January 29, 1773.

"MY DEAR SISTER,—In obedience to that direction, 'In wickedness be ye children, but in understanding be ye men,' I would in

every respect both act and speak in the most accurate manner I could. And in speaking for GOD, particularly in public, we have a further direction, 'If any man speak let him speak as the oracles of God.' Now, in the oracles of GOD there is no improper expression. Every word is the very fittest that can be. If, therefore, when I am speaking in public or private, you should observe me drop any improper expression, or if you should see any such in writing (for I often write in haste), I shall be obliged to you for telling me of it. And this I should look upon as an additional proof of your real affection for me. 'I would fain cure my friend,' says that excellent man, Dr. Hammond, 'not only of the plague, but even of warts.' So I would do to you. I would fain remove the least blemish which I may at any time observe either in your temper, or words, or actions. Deal you so with me, and with all that you love. This is not worldly, but heavenly wisdom.

"I do not advise either Sammy Wells or Neddy Bolton to use harder words than are found in St. John's First Epistle. But I advise both them and you to improve your understanding by every possible means. It is certain knowledge is an excellent gift of God when under the guidance of love.

"I thank you and our other friends for your kind assistance. As soon as it is convenient you will answer my questions. Indeed, you leave nothing undone to oblige, my dear Nancy.—Yours most affectionately,

"J. WESLEY."

No lady friend held a higher place in the esteem of Wesley and the early Methodists than Miss Bosanquet, afterwards "Mary Fletcher," wife of the saintly John Fletcher, of Madeley. She lived first at Leytonstone; afterwards at Cross Hall, near Leeds, or Birstal. This letter refers to the building of City Road Chapel. It is evident that Miss Bosanquet was interested in some project—chapel or school—in Yorkshire, for which she desired to appeal to the well-to-do London Methodists. It would be interesting to know the fuller "Westminster" address from which this letter was written. Apparently Wesley at that time, had some thought of calling the new chapel the "New Foundery." The letter is addressed, "Miss Bosanquet, near Leeds":

"Westminster, Nov. 15, 1775.

"My dear Sister,—I cannot immediately give an answer to your question because we have not yet received an answer ourselves from the Committee for letting the City lands.

"If they grant our petition and allow us a piece of ground to build on (as it is most probable they will), there will be no time for any one to come to London in hope of procuring money for other buildings. Our friends will certainly give all that they can spare toward erecting a new Foundery, and all will be little enough.

"One great difference between the outward and inward work of God is, inward holiness is mostly instantaneous, given in a large degree at the moment when we are justified, or when we are sanctified, or saved from inbred sin. But outward holiness is mostly gradual—wrought by little and little while we deny ourselves and take up our cross and work together with Him. I think you would do well to have a thorough consultation with two or three of our friends that understand the world. Certainly these might be found in or near Leeds. And whatever was then judged best should be speedily and vigorously put in execution.—I am, my dear Sister, your ever affectionate brother,

"J. Wesley."

The third letter was also addressed "To Miss Bolton, in Witney, Oxfordshire." Wesley's use of Christian names, and especially of pet names, is a most interesting study. All his sisters had pet names. He himself, as is explained elsewhere, was never called by his kith or kin anything but Jack, Jacky, Son, or Dear Brother. The only member of the family who was not called out of his baptismal name was "Charles." John Wesley more frequently than not addresses his preachers and their wives by pet names. "Nancy" was his sister Anne's name.

"London, June 5, 1783.

"Dear Nancy,—I thought it long since I heard from my Dear Nancy. But I hoped 'No news were good news,' and that this was a token of your not having had any fresh embarrassment. Undoubtedly you have your hands full of business, but it will not hurt you while

your heart is free. As long as this is given up to God, all these things must work together for good. But I wanted to know whether the clouds begin to disperse? Whether you have an hope of seeing better days? Do Neddy's difficulties increase or lessen? Has he a prospect of getting through his troubles? If his income is now superior to his expense, he has ground to believe all will end well. And how does he bear up under this burden? Does it drive him from, or lead him to, God? It is enough if it

> "'Keeps him dead to all below,
> Only Christ resolved to know.'

I have likewise great hopes that you will see a good increase of the work of God in Witney. I suppose the prayer meetings still continue. In many places they have been of more use than even the preaching. And in them the flame first broke out which afterwards spread through the whole people. You have, I hope, more than one or two who use the gift which God has given them. And if they pray for the whole Gospel salvation God will send a gracious answer down. I shall hope for the pleasure of seeing you in March. But do not stay till February before you write to, my dear Nancy, yours most affectionately,

"J. Wesley."

# Wesley's Wife.

WESLEY a few days before his marriage writes: "For many years I remained single because I believed I could be more useful in a single than a married state." These years were the whole of his Oxford life, although at that period he had his romantic correspondence with Mrs. Pendarves (afterwards Mrs. Delany), under the pseudonyms of "Cyrus" and "Aspasia." In Georgia he intended* to marry Sophia Hopkey, but while he dallied she married another. On returning to England he went on with his great work in contented celibacy for nearly ten years. Then he believed that Mrs. Grace Murray was a helpmeet for him which God had prepared; but was deprived of her by her sudden marriage in 1749 to John Bennet. Fifteen months after losing her, partly through the interference of his brother, still convinced that he might be more useful in a married state, he won the heart and hand of Mrs. Vazeille, the widow of a London merchant, with four children.

None of Wesley's biographers gives the Christian name of Mrs. Vazeille's husband, nor her own maiden name. These I have obtained from a descendant, an estimable lady whose two sons are beneficed clergymen, having Vazeille as one of their Christian names. This lady (who complains of the treatment which the character of her ancestress has received) says that Mr. Vazeille's Christian name was Anthony, and that Mrs. Vazeille's father, whose name was Goldhawk, was also a London merchant.

The acquaintance of the Wesleys with Mrs. Vazeille is traceable to the Perronets of Shoreham. Charles Wesley first met her in July, 1749, at the home of Edward Perronet, son of the vicar of Shoreham.

* This, it now appears, was not the case.

Charles took her in 1750 on a visit to his wife's family at Ludlow, and on their return to London Mrs. Vazeille entertained him and his wife for more than a week at her own house.

Wesley arrived in London on February 1, 1751, in order to be married, and no doubt his engagement with Mrs. Vazeille and the receipt of Vincent Perronet's letter advising him to marry her were then accomplished facts. Her first husband was the son of a Huguenot refugee, and Perronet's father in 1708 was naturalised as a Huguenot. This may account for the friendship of the Perronets with the Vazeilles.

Wesley says his marriage took place a few days after February 2, 1751. The *Gentleman's Magazine* gives February 18 as the day of its celebration, and the *London Magazine* February 19. The record in Wesley's Journal for those dates is as follows: "Monday, 18, was the second day I had appointed for my journey; but I was disappointed again, not being able to set my foot to the ground. However, I preached (kneeling) on Tuesday evening." The accident to his foot occurred on London Bridge on February 10 on his way to preach. In the evening he removed to Threadneedle Street to the residence of Mrs. Vazeille.

Charles Wesley had an interview with John on February 2, and writes: "My brother, returned from Oxford, sent for and told me *he was resolved to marry!* I was thunderstruck, and could only answer, he had given me the first blow, and his marriage would come like the *coup de grâce.* Trusty Ned Perronet followed, and told me the person was Mrs. Vazeille! one of whom I had never had the least suspicion. I refused his company to the chapel, and retired to mourn with my faithful Sally. I groaned all the day, and several following ones, under my own and the people's burden." His objection was evidently not to Mrs. Vazeille, but to his brother marrying at all, lest it might bring to an end the great work of which he was the leader.

Six days after the marriage Charles Wesley writes: "After sacrament, Mr. Blackwell [the banker] fell upon me in a manner peculiar to himself, dragging me to my dear sister." In three days he writes again: "My brother came to the chapel-house [West Street] with his wife. I was glad to see him; saluted her; stayed to hear him preach."

On March 4 Wesley took horse for Bristol, leaving Mrs. Wesley behind. While holding the Conference there, Charles, who remained

in London, says, "I called on my sister; kissed and assured her I was perfectly reconciled to her, and to my brother." In four days he writes again: "I brought my wife and sister together, and took all opportunities of showing the latter my sincere respect and love."

Wesley returned to London after an absence of seventeen days, remained with his newly wedded wife eight days, and then started on his northern preaching tour, remarking, "I cannot understand how a Methodist preacher can answer it to God to preach one sermon or travel one day less in a married than in a single state. In this respect surely 'it remaineth that they who have wives be as though they had none.'" He voluntarily acted as though he had none, for he did not reappear in London for two months. In June he went to Bristol, where Charles was, who wrote on June 21: "I found my sister in tears; professed my love, pity, and desire to help her. I heard her complaints of my brother, carried her to my house, where, after supper, she resumed the subject, and went away comforted." Next day he adds: "I passed another hour with her, in free, affectionate conference; then with my brother; and then with both together. Our explanation ended in prayer and perfect peace." Next day Lady Huntingdon was present at the Methodist lovefeast, and Charles says: "I introduced my sister to her ladyship, who received her with great friendliness." A few days afterwards he adds: "I communicated with my brother and sister at Lady Huntingdon's."

Mrs. Wesley's complaint against her husband very probably was his leaving her so much alone. If so, it will account for a new movement in their united lives. This was that Mrs. Wesley travelled with her husband on horseback accompanied by her daughter. Seldom is she referred to in his Journals, except sometimes at the starting; if "my wife" occurs during the journeys, it is by a rare inadvertence. In the Journal record of his visit to Osmotherley in 1752, he gives not the slightest hint that she was with him; but the steward's book of the Osmotherley Methodist Society, still in existence, has this entry: "Laid out for Mr. John Wesley; wife; daughter; William Shent and John Haime, 5s. 2d." A similar entry in 1755 shows that he was then accompanied by wife and daughter, but his Journals make no allusion to their presence.

Mrs. Wesley's itinerancy with her husband began by setting out for

Cornwall on August 19, 1751 (see Journals, August 17), and lasted two months. After five months at home, he, his wife, and daughter "took horse" (Journals, March 15, 1752) on a Sunday afternoon. In two hours they reached Hayes, Middlesex, where they stayed all night, most likely at the parsonage, as Charles Manning, the vicar, was one of Wesley's attached friends, and, if conjecture be right, was the celebrant at their marriage. They traversed a good part of England north of London, including Hull (where they were met by a mob), Epworth, Newcastle-on-Tyne, and many counties. They passed over into Ireland, and returned to London after an absence of eight months. Their third journey, in 1753, extended to Scotland, and lasted nearly four months.

Towards the end of 1753 Wesley was taken so ill in London that Dr. Fothergill, the eminent Quaker physician, ordered him out of town. His friends Mr. and Mrs. Blackwell received him at their country residence at Lewisham. His death was fully expected, and he wrote his own epitaph. In his Journal account of this illness he makes no mention of the presence of wife or brother. Charles supplies the omission. He came up from Bristol, and writes, December 2, 1753: "I found him with my sister and Mrs. Blackwell and Mrs. Dewal. I fell on his neck, and wept. All present were alike affected. . . . I followed him to his chamber, and prayed with strong desire and good hope of his recovery. . . . He made it his request to his wife and me to forget all that is past; which I readily agreed to, and once more offered her my service in great sincerity. Neither will I suspect hers, but hope she will *do* as she *says*." On December 3 Charles writes again: "I waited on my sister to Dr. Fothergill; who is much pleased with his patient's present case, and greatly approves of his hastening to the Hotwells at Bristol." That Mrs. Wesley went to Bristol Hotwells to nurse her husband is certain from the Journals for January 31, 1754: "My wife, desiring to pay the last office to her poor dying child, set out for London, and came a few days before he went home, rejoicing and praising God." What a comment is this on the sacrifice she made, not by nursing her husband, but by having to absent herself for months at a time from the children to whom she owed the duties of maternal training and care!

In 1755 she and her daughter resumed the itinerancy, thus giving

proof that she who had lived in domestic comfort tried to accommodate herself to the methods of her second husband's life. A writer censures her for complaining of the roads, the weather, the poor accommodation, etc., which she met with. When I read this, I thought of Burke's words on the insults offered to the Dauphiness Marie Antoinette: "The age of chivalry is gone; that of sophists, economists, and calculators has succeeded!"

I have traced Wesley and his wife to the sixth of their thirty years' married life. In the space allotted to me I cannot dwell upon the charges brought against Mrs. Wesley: that she became furiously jealous that her husband corresponded with ladies; that she rifled his pockets to find some of his letters; that she interpolated what she found, exhibited them to others, and made charges against him damaging to his character. On this I have only room to remark that the habit of a husband not showing his correspondence to his wife is unwise and mischievous, and that in the case of Mrs. Wesley it was followed by unhappy results. When they had been twenty years married, Wesley wrote: "For what cause I know not, my wife set out for Newcastle, purposing 'never to return.' *Non eam reliqui: non dimisi: non revocabo.*" [January 23, 1771.] (I did not desert her: I did not send her away: I will not recall her.)

She went to Newcastle, as her daughter resided there, having married in 1769 William Smith, a prosperous corn merchant and a leading Methodist in that town. He was a native of Corbridge, and at the age of fourteen was confirmed by Bishop Butler, the author of the *Analogy;* and to certain words in the service while the bishop's hands were on his head he always traced his conversion. In 1772 Wesley came to Newcastle, and remained there and in the neighbourhood for several weeks. He left Newcastle on June 15, and that Mrs. Wesley accompanied him appears from his Journals, June 30: "Calling at a little inn on the Moors, I spoke a few words to an old man there, as *my wife did* to the woman of the house. They both appeared to be deeply affected. Perhaps Providence sent us to this house for the sake of these two poor souls." He left her at Bristol, where after his departure she was subject to many slights and annoyances. From London she wrote to her husband on finance and other matters, under date May 31, 1774:

"My Dear,—Your laconic letter from Edinburgh, May 18, would have seemed strange if I had not known you. You desire me to let W. Pine have a hundred pounds with fifty to John Atlay, also fifty to the paper-maker. Amazing! Surely you must have forgot your writing to Mr. Lewis on May 6 for W. Pine to have two hundred that the rest might be lent to Kingswood School."

(Autograph letter, owned by Mr. G. Stampe, Grimsby.)

This shows that Mrs. Wesley accommodated her husband with loans for his book establishment (Pine was printer, Atlay book steward). Let this that she had done be spoken to her honour.

On Friday, October 12, 1781, Wesley writes: "I came to London, and was informed that my wife died on Monday. This evening she was buried, though I was not informed of it till a day or two after." This slight we may be sure was not by the wife's dying request, but came probably from Noah Vazeille, who was big enough and bad enough to dislike from the first a strict and religious step-father. Mrs. Wesley was buried at Camberwell. She bequeathed a ring to her husband, a method still observed by testators towards esteemed legatees who do not desire or need money.

Some of her descendants, through her pious daughter, Mrs. Smith, became more honoured in Methodism than those of the blood-relatives of her husband. Mrs. Smith had two little girls, Mary and Jane, who cried to Wesley, "Grandpapa, save us!" when he, his step-daughter and her children were in danger of being dashed down a precipice by the runaway horses of Mr. Smith's carriage (see Wesley's Journals, June 20, 1774). In after-years Mrs. Wesley's grandchild Mary married John Stamp, Methodist preacher, who began his ministry in 1787 and died in 1831. They were the grandparents of the veteran missionary Thomas William Smith Jones, of Naples, who for more than forty years was the able general superintendent of the Wesleyan Missions in the south of Italy. By the means of that remarkable mission, the importance of which it would be impossible to exaggerate, the gospel which Wesley preached has been zealously propagated in that historic land by a lineal descendant, in the fourth generation, of Wesley's wife. Jane Smith, another of her granddaughters, was married to Christopher Sundius, an influential London Methodist, on the

committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and on the first "Committee of Privileges" appointed by the Methodist Conference. The late Dr. W. W. Stamp was the son of John Stamp and his second wife (*née* Wood). Of this marriage the Rev. E. Blanshard Keeling and his literary sister, Miss Annie E. Keeling, are the grandchildren. The lineal descendants of Mrs. Vazeille-Wesley in the Church of England occupy positions of influence, and are serving their generation by the will of God. It is time that the inconsiderate abuse heaped upon Wesley's wife should cease. Her husband did not fully understand child human nature or wife human nature. His mistakes were all errors of judgment; but that he was guiltless of moral offences we feel very sure.

THOMAS MCCULLAGH.

# Wesley's Many Discouragements:

## The Difficulties of his Life-Work.

IN celebrating the Bi-Centenary of Wesley's Birth, we are liable to think that the time that has elapsed since he was born is not, after all, so very, very long as it really is. This thought may aid us in our conceptions. If his parents looked back from his cradle across the preceding two centuries, history would take them to 1503, the very year when Henry VII. gave his daughter Margaret in marriage to James IV. of Scotland, which marriage led eventually to the union of the English and Scotch Crowns, and through which marriage King Edward VII. traces his Royal descent. We then, while rejoicing over the natal day at Epworth parsonage, are removed as far from it as the babe Wesley was from a time when the Protestant Reformation had not begun, and when men were wondering at the discovery of America a few years before.

The ministerial life work of Wesley was, to use his own words, "to spread Scriptural holiness throughout the land." It is remarkable that holiness was the part of religion which impressed him most. He saw its exceeding beauty before he discovered the right method of obtaining it. In the Conference of 1765 he said: "In 1729 my brother and I read the Bible, saw inward and outward holiness therein, followed after it, and incited others so to do." These were their Oxford days, when they also read à Kempis's "Christian Pattern," Jeremy Taylor's "Holy Living," Law's "Christian Perfection," and "Serious Call," all books on holiness, but defective in not teaching the methods to obtain it. He continued: "In 1737 we saw that holiness comes by faith. In 1738 we saw we must be justified before we are sanctified. But still holiness was our point, inward and out-

ward holiness. God then thrust us out, sorely against our will, to raise a holy people."

The work of soul-winning in his day, when the masses of the population were grossly ignorant and irreligious, presented formidable difficulties. As the leader of the new movement, Wesley had to encounter rioting and violence from semi-savage mobs. Resulting from this we have Charles Wesley's grand historic hymn (some of his compositions, like some of the Psalms, are historic):

> "Worship and thanks and blessing
> And strength ascribe to Jesus."

In some riots they were left unprotected by the magistrates, and in some other riots justices of the peace actually instigated the attacks made upon them and their converts. These riots the brothers fearlessly faced.

The educated and the literary in some cases attacked them with pens dipped in gall. Smollett, who was a contemporary of Wesley's, in his History of England (vol. xv., pp. 121-2) notices Methodism as "an imposture," "fanaticism," "superstition," etc., adding: "Many thousands were infected by this enthusiasm, by the endeavours of a few obscure preachers such as Whitefield and the two Wesleys, who found means to lay the whole kingdom under contribution." When Wesley read this, he wrote: "Poor Dr. Smollett! thus to transmit to succeeding generations a whole heap of notorious falsehoods. . . . What faith can be given to his History? What credit can any man of reason give to any fact upon his authority?" Wesley was more concerned than was necessary about the "transmission to succeeding generations" of Smollett's calumnies. His "Complete History of England from the Descent of Julius Cæsar to the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1748," extended afterwards to 1764, has long ceased to be re-published. Part of it, from the Revolution (where Hume's History ends) to 1764, a bookseller published some years after Smollett's death, as a sequel to Hume's abler work. Professor Spalding, of St. Andrew's, says: "Smollett's History of England has no claim to remembrance except the celebrity otherwise gained by the author." That celebrity came to him as one of the early novelists, and of the moral tone of his works of fiction the same professor

writes: "The whimsical caricatures of Smollett and the humorous phantasies of Sterne are alike polluted by faults of which the very smallest are the coarseness of language and the unscrupulous bareness of licentious description in which they outdid Richardson. Their standard of morality is low. They display indifference to the essential distinctions between right and wrong in regard to some of the cardinal relations of society." Such was Tobias Smollett, M.D., the censor of Wesley, that "obscure" person whose name and work give special character to the latter half of the eighteenth century.

Another man of letters, Horace Walpole, writes: "Unless, as I apprehend, the Methodists are secret Papists—and no doubt they copy, build on, and extend their rites to that model—Popery will not revive here." In visiting Bath in 1766, he availed himself of the opportunity of hearing Wesley at Lady Huntingdon's Chapel. This was his "snap-shot" portrait of the preacher: "A clean, elderly man, fresh-coloured, his hair smoothly combed, but with a little soupçon of curl at the end. Wonderfully clever, but as evidently an actor as Garrick." With the comparison with Garrick we cannot agree. Whitefield was the histrionic preacher of the Methodist revival; but if Wesley was less dramatic, his earnestness in the pulpit was more intense. Walpole further describes Wesley's sermon and his hearers: "There were parts and eloquence in it, but towards the end he exalted his voice and acted very ugly enthusiasm. . . . Except a few from curiosity and some 'honourable women,' the congregation was very mean. There was a Scotch Countess of Buchan, namely, Agnes, mother of the celebrated Lord Erskine." (Walpole's Letters, Vol. v.). Lady Buchan appointed Wesley her chaplain.

The aged Dr. William Barnard, Bishop of Derry, a friend to Wesley, was then at Bath, and probably was sitting unseen in Nicodemus' corner, as Lady Betty Cobbe named a curtained pew just inside the door into which she smuggled many a bishop and notability, where they could hear without being seen.

Horace Walpole is styled by one author as "superficial and sceptical," and by another it is said that few clever men in the eighteenth century "shared more fully in the Voltairian scepticism than Walpole." Of him Macaulay writes: "Whatever was little seemed to him great, and whatever was great seemed to him little. Serious business was

to him a trifle, and trifles were his serious business." In contrast to Walpole's description of Wesley's service, let us look at Wesley's own account: "Sunday, October 5. At eight I administered the Sacrament at Lady H.'s Chapel in Bath; at eleven I preached there from these words in the Gospel for the day, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' The word was quick and powerful, and I trust that many, even of the rich and great, felt themselves sinners before God."

Episcopal opposition was a formidable obstacle in the way of the Wesleys in their efforts to spread Scriptural holiness throughout the land. In their earlier interviews with Potter, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Gibson, Bishop of London, both prelates received them kindly. It was not until they began preaching in the open air, and introduced other irregularities, that His Grace of Canterbury launched his *brutum fulmen* against Charles Wesley. In conversing with Gibson in 1738, the Bishop seemed more tolerant than the Methodist clergyman. When Charles expressed his purpose to re-baptise those who had been baptised by Dissenters, the Bishop expressed the strongest disapproval. In 1739, when the Methodist movement was gathering strength, he issued a "Pastoral Letter" to the people of his diocese, guarding them against "Lukewarmness on the one hand and Enthusiasm on the other." The second part was directed mainly against Whitefield, as it abounds in quotations from his journal, and to the "Pastoral" Whitefield published a reply. Gibson must have known Samuel Wesley, Rector of Epworth, as he became Bishop of Lincoln in 1716, from which he was translated to London in 1723. He was much esteemed, and, in prospect of Archbishop Wake's death, he was spoken of as "the heir-apparent of Canterbury. Potter, Bishop of Oxford, "a good scholar, a good Churchman, and a man of irreproachable character," who had ordained the Wesleys, was promoted instead. These two prelates, with whom the Wesleys had most to do, died in the same year (1748). Not long before his death Bishop Gibson was appealed to by the churchwardens of St. Bartholomew the Great, whose Rector, Bateman, had opened his pulpit to Wesley, to forbid him to do so again. The aged Bishop replied: "What would you have me to do? I have no right to hinder him. Mr. Wesley is a clergyman regularly ordained, and under no eccle-

siastical censure." Wesley, whose last entry in his last Journal is that he preached in two churches, was treated in his old age, not with hostility, but with marked courtesy, by Lowth, Bishop of London, who pre-deceased Wesley not quite four years. The two prelates who attacked Wesley with bitterness and scurrility were Lavington and Warburton.

Of George Lavington we learn as follows from Polewhele's "Devonshire." He was born in 1683, educated at Winchester School, whence he removed to a Fellowship in New College, Oxford, where he took his degree of B.C.L. in 1713. In 1717 he was presented to the living of Hayford Warren, after which he was made Prebendary of Worcester, and, in 1732, Canon of St. Paul's. He then took his Doctor's degree, and obtained successively the Rectories of St. Mary, Aldermary, and St. Michael, Bassishaw. In 1747 he was made Bishop of Exeter, where he died in 1762.

Lavington's "Enthusiasm of the Methodists and Papists Compared" was published in three parts; the first anonymously early in 1749; the second in the latter part of that year, and the third in 1751. The three appeared soon after in book form in two volumes. The "comparer" showed much ingenuity in his selections from the visions and wild sayings of so-called "saints" of the Romish Church, and some of the extracts from Whitefield's and Wesley's Journals and Appeals. In Wesley's letter in reply he completely convicts the Bishop of dishonesty in his ingenuity by omitting words and sentences in the passages which he quotes from Wesley, or by wrenching them from their context, so as to give these passages a different, and sometimes opposite meaning to that of the author. In summarising the Bishop's accusations against the Methodists, Wesley reminded him they were "pride and vanity, shuffling and prevarication, an affectation of prophesying, laying claim to the miraculous, art and cunning, giving up inspiration, scepticism, infidelity, atheism, uncharitableness to opponents, fierce, rancorous quarrels with each other, a tendency to undermine morality and good works, and to carry on the work of Popery." To see how Wesley met this frightful indictment the reader should peruse his powerful "Letters to the Bishop of Exeter," in volume ix. of his Works. His closing remark to Lavington in his longest letter is: "You regard neither mercy, justice, nor truth. To vilify, to blacken,

is your one point. I pray God it may not be laid to your charge!" Miss Wedgwood, a non-Methodist writer on Wesley, says: "Bishop Lavington deserves to be coupled with the men who flung dead cats and rotten eggs at the Methodists." "The levity and buffoonery" charged upon the "Enthusiasm of the Methodists and Papists Compared" was its greatest attraction to those—and their name was legion—who wanted not to argue with Whitefield and the Wesleys, but to overwhelm them with ridicule. Hence this was the most popular of the numerous attacks upon the Methodists.

On August 29, 1762, Wesley was at Exeter, and partook of the Lord's Supper at the Cathedral, having as one of his fellow-communicants his old opponent, Bishop Lavington. "Oh," he writes, "may we sit down together in the Kingdom of our Father." It is pathetic to record that in a few weeks after this service the Bishop died. It is noteworthy that Cornwall, the whole of which was in Bishop Lavington's diocese, became the most Methodist county in England.

William Warburton (1698-1779) was the other Episcopal opponent of Wesley. He was distinguished as a scholar (although he had not had a university training) and an author. He was pugnacious and proud. Dr. Lowth (afterwards Bishop of London), whom he wantonly attacked, wrote to him: "Now, my lord, as you have in your whole behaviour and in all your writings remarkably distinguished yourself by your humility, levity, meekness, forbearance, candour, humanity, decency, good manners, good temper, moderation with regard to the opinion of others, and a modest diffidence of your own," etc., etc. This irony Wesley retained human nature enough to relish. "I read," he writes, "Bishop Lowth's 'Answer' to Bishop W. If anything human could be a cure for pride, surely such a medicine as this would!" Warburton's learned reputation was for learning of a curious kind, connected with the ancient mysteries, Egyptian hieroglyphics, etc., which he showed in his "Divine Legation of Moses," of which Bentley, Master of Trinity, said: "Warburton is a man of enormous appetite and poor digestion." This work he published as a contribution to the Deistical controversy, with the result that it was regarded as more Deistical than the Deistical writers themselves. He was far more a man of letters than a spiritually-minded minister. When Pope's "Essay on Man" was pronounced to be the sceptical philosophy of

Bolingbroke turned into verse, Warburton defended Pope, and became a frequent guest with the petulant, half-Romanist, half-infidel satirist at Twickenham. His attack on Whitefield and Wesley did not take place until he had become Bishop of Gloucester. His friend and biographer, Bishop Hurd, writes: "What is called Methodism had spread among the people. It was a new species of Puritanism. The sect appeared first at Oxford, where two Fellows of Colleges, Mr. George Whitefield and Mr. John Wesley, were its chief promoters." Speaking of Whitefield as the Fellow of College shows that the courtly Bishop Hurd had not an intimate knowledge of the "Godly Club." He describes the Methodists as Puritans, not, like Lavington, as Papists. Hurd further speaks of Whitefield as "weak," and of Wesley as "unquestionably a shrewd man." "The Bishop of Gloucester," he continues, "watched his motions with care for some years, and gained such an insight into his views and character from his Journals as to be able to give a fair and full account of him to the public." He then shows that the result was Warburton's "'Doctrine of Grace,' in two small volumes, 12mo." How Warburton dealt with Wesley we may learn from Wesley's "Letters to the Lord Bishop of Gloucester, occasioned by his tract 'On the Office and Operations of the Holy Spirit'" (Works, vol. ix.). In this letter Wesley disproves Warburton's main accusation: "Of modern fanatics, Mr. John Wesley has laid claim to almost every apostolic gift in as full and ample a manner as they were possessed of old." To prove this allegation he cites entries in Wesley's Journals. In reply, Wesley enumerates the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, and asks, "Which of them have I claimed?" He protested that he never pretended to exercise any miraculous gift. He explained passage after passage from his Journal, cited by the Bishop, most satisfactorily. Our only regret is that Wesley, in recording some extraordinary interpositions of Providence, should so describe them that others should regard them as miracles. If they did not charge him with claiming power to perform them, it caused them to accuse him of excessive credulity. A modern Church dignitary writes: "With Warburton Methodists were not to be argued with, for they were impervious to argument; so he abused them, instead of confuting them."

The opposition to Wesley by his avowed enemies he felt less pain-

fully than the desertion of old friends. He was abandoned by the Oxford Methodists, who had borne with him the scoffs of gownsmen when the University was at its nadir, both with regard to learning and religion. Ingham, his companion in Georgia, and Gambold, the lovable but dreamy mystic, left him for the Moravians, as did Stonehouse, Vicar of Islington, Charles Wesley's convert. Clayton became High Church and a Jacobite at Manchester. Broughton could not see that Wesley needed any more religion than he had at Oxford. James Hervey maintained friendly relations with his old tutor in Hebrew until near the end of his saintly life, when he was pained by the publication of Wesley's letter containing animadversions on his "Theron and Aspasio." Wesley felt acutely the conduct of Cennick at Kingswood in dividing the society where the Wesleys had won great Gospel triumphs. He left Wesley for Whitefield, and Whitefield for the Moravians. In Ireland, that mint of nick-names, he was branded "Swaddler." He was instrumental in the conversion of John Montgomery, who removed to Scotland, where his wife, three months after, gave birth to James Montgomery the poet, who used to say in after years he had a narrow escape from being an Irishman. In adult life he was a constant worshipper at Norfolk Street Chapel, Sheffield. Several of his hymns, including "Hail to the Lord's Anointed" and "For ever with the Lord," are in the New Supplement of the Methodist Hymn Book. The defection which Wesley felt most was that of Thomas Maxfield, whom the Bishop of Derry ordained to help Wesley in administering the Sacraments. His errors on Christian perfection, and his active opposition in dividing the Foundery Society, wounded to the quick the man to whom the ingrate owed everything that he had.

My space is gone, and I cannot dwell on Wesley's grief at Whitefield's separation from him, and his joy at their reconciliation, when Whitefield "breathed nothing but love." Nor can I give the barest outline of the lamentable disruption with Lady Huntingdon, nor the disgraceful ribaldry of Toplady and the two Hills. I must also omit an account of the small Dissenting party who troubled the later years of Wesley's life, but whom he resisted, so that, after his decease, Methodism gradually drifted into a position of ecclesiastical independence and occupied the *via media* between the Church of England and Dissenting Churches, "the friends of all, the enemies of none." *Esto perpetua!*

THOMAS MCCULLAGH.

# Wesley's Dilemmas.

THAT Wesley should have been charged with inconsistency in regard to his own avowed principles need not surprise us, or cause any uneasiness as to his good name. He found himself in the presence of serious dilemmas, forced upon him by the peremptory demands of his evangelistic work; and anyone who will deliberately review the position will easily be disposed to plead on his behalf. No critic can come to a fair judgment of Wesley's actions who does not, at least, make a candid attempt to put himself in the place of the man whom he judges, and to look through his eyes at the problems with which he had to deal. Throughout Wesley's career, more especially in the earlier part of it, many of his critics showed themselves to be disqualified for their task by their being unwilling, or perhaps unable, to view things as he saw them. The truth was that his position, in its startling novelty, so shocked and challenged their own habits of thought as to make an even poise of judicial inquiry very difficult; and they could give him credit for neither sincerity nor good motive. In their eyes the widespread effects of his religious zeal could not be admitted as evidence in his favour, but rather aggravated his offence. Had he been an unpractical visionary, whose eccentricities hardly gained influence beyond his own life, he might have been left to himself; but it was intolerable and exasperating that he should throw the spell of his irregular enthusiasm over thousands of the people all up and down the land.

It is really very easy, not only to put ourselves alongside of the historic Wesley, but actually to look into the inmost mind of the man. Being, for many years, put continually on his defence, he was compelled to write a great deal about himself and his work. And never did anyone write with more unreserved freedom or more transparent

self-revelation. If a reader find obscurity in Wesley's words, he may be sure that he has himself brought the cloud.

There were times in his history when he found himself unwillingly driven into a most perplexing dilemma, not about small and unimportant things, but about matters of great magnitude and moment. Each side of the alternatives by which he was confronted involved principles having the very strongest claims upon him. Nor could he wait for time to make easier the way of choice. The need of immediate decision, in each case, was insisted upon by the compulsion of circumstances. For the moment self was thrown into sharp conflict with self; and no wonder if those who looked on without sympathy found him guilty of inconsistency.

The plain fact was that Wesley the ecclesiastic and Wesley the evangelist were at times in collision. The strict Church principles in which he was bred had become part of his very nature; and loyalty to them demanded the most tenacious conservatism. That the religious movement, at the head of which he found himself, should ever break the bounds of Church order seemed to him a calamity to be prevented at any cost; and the spectre of it haunted him to his dying day. When, however, he was forced to decide between ecclesiastical precision and order and the exigencies created by the revival, he rarely faltered. When he did, it was on points of minor importance,—such, for instance, as requiring the Methodists to receive the sacraments at the parish church, and forbidding them to hold services in church hours; though on both these points he found himself at last sometimes obliged to give way.

The first great dilemma was concerning field-preaching. Whitefield's strenuous zeal, which so amazed and frightened the parish priests that they shut their pulpits against him, could brook no restraint. He had tasted the sweets of success, the joy of harvest; and the people listened greedily to the gospel of the grace of God, and many were saved. As he was then preparing to cross the Atlantic, he sent for Wesley, whose sense of Church propriety was offended on hearing that his young co-worker was committing the startling irregularity of preaching out of doors. He hastened to Bristol, fully prepared to establish order; but, like Barnabas at Antioch, "when he came and had seen the grace of God, was glad." On the day that Whitefield left Bristol

he himself preached, taking his stand "on a little eminence in a ground adjoining the city." "I could scarce reconcile myself," he says, "at first to this strange way of preaching in the fields; having been all my life, till very lately, so tenacious of every point relating to decency and order that I should have thought the saving of souls almost a sin if it had not been done in a church."

There was no time for deliberation. The circumstances, as we have said, demanded immediate decision. Because the old Church skins could not stand the vigour of the new wine, was the vintage to be therefore abandoned? To gain some notion of the immense importance of the step into irregularity now taken, we have but to ask ourselves what would have been the result had the other alternative been accepted. It is beyond doubt that Methodism would have been wholly crippled, if not, indeed, strangled. If Wesley was inconsistent here, let us all praise God for his inconsistency.

Very soon other dilemmas arose, in which the claims of his successful work and the dictates of his conservative Churchism came again into competition. His own description of his attitude is most interesting. "I hold," he says, "all the doctrines of the Church of England. I love her liturgy. I approve her plan of discipline, and only wish it could be put in execution. I do not knowingly vary from any rule of the Church, unless in those few instances when I judge, and as far as I judge, there is an absolute necessity." Again, writing to a friendly clergyman, he says: "It is true in some things we vary from the rules of our Church; but no further than we apprehend is our bounden duty. It is from a full conviction of this that we preach abroad, use extemporary prayer, form those who appear to be awakened into societies, and permit laymen, whom we believe God has called, to preach."

All this, no doubt, was very hard for other Churchmen, with a few exceptions, to understand. But to Wesley himself it was perfectly clear, and easily justified. He saw no reason why all that Methodism meant, and all that it was fast growing to mean, should not remain within the Established Church. But he also saw that, if this were to be, the Church must provide a living organisation, giving scope for the free exercise and nurture of the quickened spiritual life which had come into existence; and that a rigid insistence upon ecclesiastical order, as it had come to be interpreted and observed, left no room either for the

reaping or the garnering of the ripened harvest. He certainly claimed for himself liberty to judge at what points, and how far, the existing rule, as he naïvely put it, had to be "varied"; and who can be surprised if this claim seemed to many to be unpardonable presumption and disloyalty? They looked at the whole question strictly and only from the ecclesiastical side. He, too, with strong sympathy, saw it thus; but he was also conscious of the mighty spiritual force which was working wonders on every hand. This all-important element in the case they seemed to be unable to apprehend. When, later on, he discovered that, according to the New Testament, he was as really a bishop as any prelate on the bench of lords spiritual, and thereupon proceeded to ordain two of the lay preachers to the full functions of the Christian ministry, he became in the eyes of his fellow Churchmen past praying for.

G. Stringer Rowe.

# Thomas Walsh:

## The Scholar Saint of Early Methodism.

A GREAT General is dependent not only for success upon his own powers of leadership, but also on the men he leads. Wesley was the great General of the hosts of God in the eighteenth century. Whilst his memory must be honoured, the instruments of his success must not be ignored.

Wesley is in no danger of being forgotten, but with some of his greatest helpers it is far otherwise. Methodism does not possess "a calendar of her saints," and even a man like Thomas Walsh too soon becomes a shadowy name. The mention of Thomas Walsh to a Methodist audience to-day elicits no applause. Methodists are not tired of hearing of him, for most of them have never heard him mentioned, and the tale of his doings is most surprising because of its amazing freshness. Yet no figure in Early Methodism is more striking, no life story more dramatic in its incidents, or in its brilliant service, and, according to one Anglican authority, Walsh was one of the greatest influences on Wesley's mind and teaching. You continually come across Walsh in the Journals. He is Wesley's model for young preachers. "Be another Thomas Walsh," he writes, and he can say no more. Southey singles him out for the highest praise, and treats his saintly character with special sympathy. His ministry was only eight years long, but his biography is the longest of any of the "Lives of the Early Methodist Preachers."

Amongst "the fathers who begat us" he was treated with a reverence given to none other of their number. To-day he is in danger of oblivion. In the two popular volumes on "Methodist Preachers" recently published, his place is relatively small. It has been too readily

assumed of late that the early preachers were illiterate men. A closer knowledge of their lives would modify this assumption, and it must always be remembered that one of them, Thomas Walsh, was a Methodist prince of scholarship.

It is no idle panegyric, but sober truth, to say that Methodism has never had a greater son. His saintliness of character has never been surpassed. Despite small educational advantages, it is doubtful if successive generations of Methodists have produced a dozen scholars equal to him in Biblical knowledge. He was the most successful evangelist that Wesley ever knew, and his popularity as a preacher for a time was not eclipsed by that of our great Founder himself. Surely the memory of such a man should be kept green and fresh, for the story of his life is a great fount of inspiration.

Thomas Walsh, an Irishman and a Roman Catholic, was born in 1730. In 1748 he was converted to Protestantism; a little later, under the influence of Methodist field preaching, he was converted to God. He immediately applied himself to the improving of his mind. He had already the elements of a good education, but now he threw his whole soul into the acquiring of knowledge for the glory of God. He applied to Wesley for authority to preach. Wesley treated him with his customary caution, and ultimately told him to preach in Irish. His preaching made a great sensation in his native country. The priests feared his influence. Various legends were forged about him. They said that "Thomas Walsh is dead, and he that now preacheth in his name is the devil, who hath taken his guise." He was mobbed and imprisoned. He preached, however, from the prison window to great crowds, who were much moved. He was threatened with death if he would not promise to preach no more, but no threats could deter him from his duty. In the North of Ireland Presbyterian mobs treated him with still greater cruelty, but he went on preaching the Gospel with remarkable power.

Some years of his ministry were spent in London. People flocked to the Foundery to hear him. He was very delicate, and aggravated his natural weakness by preaching too loud and too long. Notwithstanding the mortal disease that had him in its grip, he preached twice every day, and sometimes spent fourteen hours a day in study.

His whole life was pitched in a high key. His conduct was marked

by unremitting toil and wonderful devotion, and in the eight short years of his ministry he turned multitudes to God.

The distinctive features of his life were *saintliness* and *scholarship*. Southey says that his character was of such a lustre "that it might even have convinced Roman Catholics that there were saints outside their own communion." His Journal is a devotional manual of the highest order. It can best be compared with David Brainerd's, with which it shows many correspondences. Along with Thomas à Kempis, Wesley's Hymns, and Smetham's letters, it should find a place in every Methodist's devotions. It is impossible to read it out without bitter personal humiliation. It sounds the depths and scales the heights of religious experience.

Walsh seemed to his contemporaries to live in heavenly places. His face was luminous with spiritual light. He is said to have heard voices that other men could not hear. In his sleep his lips would still utter praises. A woman observed him through the keyhole or crevices of his study door, and would sometimes find him prostrate on the floor, praying to God, but always at work or at prayer. He was most careful of his time. "Will a man rob God?" he said, when he was begged to take more sleep. "I have but one life," he said, "and it is a hard case if I cannot live that for His sake, Who gave His life a ransom for mine." He was rarely to be seen without a book in his hand. When he stayed in an inn he forgot his surroundings in the Hebrew Psalter, and he often reproached himself, when his spirits were low, for his tendency to waste time in talk rather than spend it in study. In a word, he has the features of the saint in a marked degree. Wesley said the Church of the middle ages never produced a holier man.

His scholarship is no less remarkable. Wesley says of him: "I knew a young man who was so thoroughly acquainted with the Bible that if he was questioned concerning any Hebrew word in the Old, or any Greek word in the New Testament, he would tell, after a little pause, not only how often the one or the other occurred in the Bible, but also what it meant in every place. His name was Thomas Walsh. Such a master of Biblical knowledge I never saw before and never expect to see again."

"He was the best Hebraist I ever knew." What is most remarkable is that he only took a single year to learn the Hebrew language. He

himself felt he received special Divine help for the purpose. "God is His own interpreter." And the study of Walsh was half prayer. He wrestled at once with Hebrew and the spirit of God for mastery. With his Bible open before him on his knees he gained the victory.

He was twenty-eight when he died. Eight short years made him scholar, saint, orator, and evangelist. It is hard to find his superior in any branch. In the combination of these gifts where is his equal? And yet to-day he is in danger of being forgotten!

> "Though such souls alone,
> God, stooping, shows sufficient of His light,
> For us i' the dark to rise by."

J. Ernest Rattenbury.

# The Teaching of Wesley's Mother.

THE open secret of the strength, dignity, and grace of Susanna Wesley's character lay in her profound reverence for God. Dr. Pope defines reverence as "the habitual sense of the presence of God that gives dignity to life, and makes the character of him who cultivates it venerable. It is both the source and the issue of all godliness. It is the supreme and eternal duty and grace of the created spirit. In God's presence more particularly it is awe." Methodists may not worship the mother of the Wesleys, but we cannot read her treatises and letters devoted to the spiritual education of her children without a deepening veneration for her. With her son John we catch the reflection of her awe in the Divine Presence.

She confesses the limitations of thought and language in the presence of God. In the second of her remarkable "Conferences" with her daughter Emilia she admits that "all the angelic and human nature, if united in one mind, would fail in power to define His infinite perfection! God only knows what God is. Nothing in his essence or nature is hid from Him. I cannot so much as think on this boundless subject, but I feel my understanding confounded and overwhelmed with the least perception of His majesty and glory. And I am never at so great a loss for words as when I endeavour to express the little and imperfect sense I have of God so clearly as to be well understood by those I speak to.

"We know but very little of our own nature; how, then, shall we presume to think of His, Who created all things, Who infinitely transcends our most sublime apprehensions, Who dwells in inaccessible light to which no man can approach?

"It is impossible for me so to explain the term infinity as to give an adequate conception of what is above the brightest created mind to conceive. Finite can never comprehend infinite. There are no words in

our own language, nor in all the languages on earth, whereby to express infinity."

John Wesley was possessed by the same overwhelming sense of the transcendent greatness of God. This found expression in his selection and translations, from the German, of the majestic hymns which impart an element of solemn grandeur to the earlier hymnology of Methodism:

> "Thee to perfection can we know?
> O height immense! What words suffice
> Thy countless attributes to show?"
>
> —Ernst Lange.

Tersteegen's "Lo! God is here! let us adore," is another of Wesley's fine renderings. These hymns lost nothing by translation. Professor Hatfield has well said that as an original poet, John Wesley's chief trait is loftiness and majesty; the "great style" at its full height never becoming florid or bombastic. Again and again we mark the swelling of the deep Miltonian organ tone, where the original shows a much less exalted strain. Miss Wedgwood, in her thoughtful essay on Wesley, marks the resemblance of mother and son in "logical intellect and fearless honesty," but neither she, nor other writers, have recognised so fully as Dr. Rigg, in his "Living Wesley," their capacity of philosophic reflectiveness.

Her consciousness of the limitations of thought did not drive Susanna Wesley into agnosticism. Nor did this lead her, as she says, "to discard reason from having anything to do in matters of religion." Dr. Adam Clarke tells us that her religion was "as rational as it was Scriptural and profound." Nor did she drift into extremes of mysticism —and she guarded her children, to whom she was theological instructor, against this danger. "Though reason," she writes, "is of itself too weak and insufficient to direct us the way that leads to eternal life, yet, when enlightened and directed by God's Holy Spirit, it is of admirable use to strengthen our faith. Those are alike to blame who either indulge or despise it. A little learning and study will serve to convince us that there are innumerable things that surpass the force of human understanding. Nor is it hard for an honest mind that is willing to know the truth to discern when reason ought to submit, and when it is able to comprehend; when it should doubt, and when it should rest assured.

"And, if we would act reasonably, we shall neither stifle the prin-

ciples of reason, nor build too much upon them; for by doing the first we make our religion childish and ridiculous, and by the other we exclude all supernatural assistance and mysterious truths from it, and thereby cut off all hope of salvation by Jesus Christ, as M. Pascal has well observed."

Mrs. Wesley's writings show that she was a careful student of Pascal. Her son published a translation of his "Pensées," in his Christian Library, in which we find the passage she refers to: "If we bring down all things to Reason, our Religion will have nothing in it mysterious or supernatural. If we stifle the principles of Reason, our Religion will be absurd and ridiculous."

Mrs. Wesley distinguished between the knowledge of God that is "the effect of reason assisted by human learning," and the knowledge which is an "effect of reason acting by the influence and direction of the Holy Spirit, and by which God is known to the heart and will, not only as the Author of our being, but the Healer and Repairer of the lapse and misery of human nature; a Saviour, Him whom our soul loveth."

She gave a prominent place to the will in the search for God and truth, and asserted her conviction that "if we are but heartily willing to know the truth we shall certainly know it. When the will peremptorily resolves to embrace and adhere to truth without regarding the consequences of doing so, and when fervent and constant prayer is added," she maintains that "it is inconsistent with all the notions we have of Divine goodness to suppose that God should suffer such a man to fall into damnable error, or withhold from him the guidance of His Spirit in the search for truth." This encouraging thought is finely expressed by her son Charles:—

> "A helpless soul that looks to Thee
> Is sure at last Thy face to see,
> And all Thy goodness to partake;
> The sinner who for Thee doth grieve,
> And longs, and labours to believe,
> Thou never, never wilt forsake."

But Mrs. Wesley's singularly apt quotation of the "promise of Him that cannot deceive" is equally inspiring: "My son, if thou wilt receive my words . . . so that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom and

apply thine heart to understanding; yea, if thou criest after knowledge and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God."

It might be supposed by some that a teacher who gave such prominence to the use of the reason and will in religion would be lacking in fervour of devotion. But there are passages in the "Manual," in which Mrs. Wesley recorded her meditations, which glow with sanctified emotion. In the "Evening" we find her writing,—

"If to esteem and have the highest reverence for Thee, if constantly and sincerely to acknowledge Thee the Supreme, the only desirable Good, be to love Thee, I do love Thee!

"If comparatively to despise and undervalue all the world contains which is esteemed great, fair, or good; if earnestly and constantly to desire Thee, Thy favour, Thy acceptance, Thyself rather than any or all things thou created, be to love Thee, I do love Thee!

"If to rejoice in Thy essential Majesty and Glory; if to feel a vital joy overspread and cheer the heart at each perception of Thy blessedness, at every thought that Thou art God, and that all things are in Thy power, that there is none superior or equal to Thee, be to love Thee, I do love Thee."

Here, again, we are reminded of John Wesley's translations of the hymns of Rothe and Tersteegen. His "logical intellect" did not chill his devotion. His was a "calmly fervent zeal."

Wesley's mother taught that an intellectual and fervent devotional life need not weaken tender human feeling, or produce a stilted type of religious character. "I do not love distance or ceremony," she once wrote to her son "Sammy," who had addressed her as "Madam." "There is more love and tenderness in the name of Mother than in all the complimental titles in the world." Adam Clarke assures us that the Wesleys had the common fame of being the most loving family in the county of Lincoln. John Wesley expresses admiration at the serenity with which his mother transacted business, wrote letters, and conversed, surrounded by thirteen children. She was the centre of the household affection. Her daughter Martha clung to her with "a sort of idolatry." Her son John, soon after leaving home, heard that she was ill, and wrote to her with pathetic endearment, expressing the hope

that he might die before her, in order to escape the anguish of witnessing her death. "You did well," she afterwards wrote, "to correct that fond desire of dying before me, since you do not know what work God may have for you to do before you leave the world."

She warned her son John against the dangers of a morbid asceticism. She disagreed with à Kempis in his condemnation of all mirth and pleasure as sinful or useless, in opposition to "so many direct and plain texts of Scripture." She held that "'tis stupid to say nothing is an affliction to a good man." "It is much wiser and safer to deprecate great afflictions than to pray for them, and our Lord knew what was in man when He directed us to pray, 'Lead us not into temptation.'" She would have "everyone enjoy the present hour," but she also wrote, wisely, "Take this rule: Whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, or takes off the relish of spiritual things; in short, whatever increases the authority of your body over your mind, that thing is sin to you, however innocent it may be in itself." She taught that the highest delight is "to find a constant sense of God upon the soul, as Herbert excellently expresses it:—

> "'Not—thankful, when it pleaseth me,
> As if Thy blessings had spare days;
> But such a heart whose pulse may be
> Thy praise.'"
> (THE TEMPLE—GRATEFULNESS.)

Mrs. Wesley believed that every Christian, whether an ordained minister or not, has "a charge of souls." This was the burden of her well-known letter to her husband concerning her services in the Rectory kitchen. But she asserted this with sincere humility. "I never durst positively presume to hope that God would make use of me as an instrument in doing good. The furthest I ever dare go was, It may be; who can tell? 'With God all things are possible,' I will resign myself to Him; or, as Herbert better expresseth it:—

> "'Only—since God doth vessels make
> Of lowly matter, for high uses meet—
> I throw me at His feet.
> There will I lie, until my Master seek
> For some mean stuff, whereon to show His skill;
> Then is my time.'
> (THE TEMPLE—THE PRIESTHOOD.)

"And thus I rested without passing any reflection on myself, or forming any judgment about the success or event of the undertaking."

She evidently taught her son John to love Herbert. He inserted six of his hymns in his first Hymn Book, published at Charlestown in 1737. The four quotations in his third volume of sermons show that he read Herbert with as much discrimination as he did à Kempis. And in this discreet use of devotional works he was following the counsel of his mother. After commending Scougal's "Life of God in the Soul of Man," she refers to "the many good things in Baxter, with some faults, which I overlook, for the sake of the virtues. Nor can I say, of all the books of divinity I have read, which is the best; one is best at one time, one at another, according to the temper and disposition of the mind."

Susanna Wesley cultivated the missionary spirit. Her husband had sympathies which overleaped all parochial boundaries, and devised a great Mission for India, China, and Abyssinia. His father, John Wesley, the Nonconformist, had been possessed by a burning desire to go to Surinam or Maryland. About the time of the Rectory services, an account of the work of the Danish missionaries at Tranquebar came into Mrs. Wesley's hands, and stirred her soul to its depths, producing a gracious spiritual quickening, a passionate desire for the salvation of souls. Writing to her husband, she said she was neither a man nor a minister, but she thought she might pray more for the people, and speak with more warmth to them. "However, I resolved to begin with my own children." And so she began the famous private conference with each child. When her sons were called to Georgia, and told her, now a widow, that their consent depended upon hers, she replied, "If I had twenty sons, I should rejoice they were all so employed, though I should never see them again."

"The Wesleys' mother was the mother of Methodism in a religious and moral sense," wrote the philosophic critic, Isaac Taylor. "The high tone of her mind, its independence, and its self-control; the warmth of her devotional feelings, and the practical direction given to them, came up and were visibly repeated in the character and conduct of her sons." John's escape from the burning parsonage led her, as she said in one of her meditations, to be "more particularly careful for the soul of this child." In her letters to him at Oxford she urged him to make

religion the business of his life. She declared herself present with him in spirit at the meetings of the Holy Club. She warned him against the extravagances of Mysticism, and helped him to settle the question of Predestination. He read to her the record of his evangelical conversion, and she heartily blessed God who had brought him "to this way of thinking." It was to her he turned for counsel when the necessity arose of founding the first Methodist societies, of which her gatherings in the Rectory kitchen had been a beautiful type. She recognised the Divine call of the first lay preacher at the Foundery. "John," she said, "you know what my sentiments have been. You cannot suspect me of favouring readily anything of this kind. But take care what you do with respect to that young man; for he is as surely called of God to preach as you are. Examine what have been the fruits of his preaching, and hear him yourself." And Wesley writes in his record of his mother's death:—

"I cannot but further observe that even she, as well as her father and grandfather, her husband and her three sons, had been, in her measure and degree, a preacher of righteousness!"

THOMAS E. BRIGDEN.

# The Reading of Wesley's Preachers.

AT the celebration of the centenary of Wesley's death, Dr. Moulton asked, "How may the lessons of Wesley's life be adapted to the conditions of the age in which we live?" "It is idle to exclaim," continued the scholar saint of modern Methodism, "that they may be adopted without change; that we may imitate as a faithful copyist reproduces the manuscript before him. . . . We must be makers of history. In so far as we apprehend and make our own the living influences around us and within us shall we be a source of living power for the years that are not yet born."

Books, old as well as new, are among these living influences; "for books," as one of Wesley's favourites, Milton, says, "are not absolutely dead things, but doe contain a potencie of life in them to be as active as that Soule was whose progeny they are; nay, they do preserve, as in a viol, the purest efficacie and extraction of that living intellect that bred them."

Some readers of the twentieth century, glancing at the archaic type of some of Wesley's publications, and smiling at the bewigged or fringed faces of his preachers in the old Magazine portraits, will ask if the preachers' books are not as much out of date as their wigs, and their methods of mental progress as antiquated as their Georgian methods of locomotion. But there is no difficulty to-day in obtaining *modern* editions of the most important books recommended by Wesley. At least a dozen of them have had a resurrection within the last decade. They no longer wander about, as Spurgeon once remarked, "like the old saints, in sheepskins and goatskins"; but they are clad in art linen, in lambskin and leatherette, green and gold, in a style that might satisfy a William Morris. The Rev. Frederick W. Macdonald has recently reviewed one of them in

the *Methodist Recorder*—Law's *Serious Call**—"a classic that has survived the fire of criticism and the tooth of time";† and Dr. Banks has written‡ on Scougal's *The Life of God in the Soul of Man*, which can also be obtained in a charming modern edition. We may have no feverish desire to be "up-to-date" in our reading; but if we are stirred by the nobler aim expressed by Dr. Moulton, to make our own the living influences around us, we must reckon among those influences these and other classics of the soul commended and published by Wesley. "For a goode booke," again saith Milton, "is the pretious life-blood of a master spirit, imbalmed and treasured up on purpose to a Life beyond Life."

1. *Wesley regarded reading as an antidote to fanaticism.* In his *Large Minutes*, 1744-1770, we find the following precepts for preachers: "Read the most useful books, and that regularly and constantly. *But I read only the Bible.* Then you ought to teach others to read only the Bible, and by parity of reason, to *hear* only the Bible. But if so, you need preach no more. Just so said George Bell. And what is the fruit? Why, now he neither reads the Bible nor anything else. This is rank enthusiasm. If you need no book but the Bible, you have got above St. Paul. He wanted others too. 'Bring the books,' says he. *But I have no taste for reading.* Contract a taste for it. *But different men have different tastes.* Therefore some may read less than others, but none should read less than this. *But I have no books.* I will give each of you, as fast as you will read them, books to the value of five pounds. And I desire that all the large societies provide the Christian Library for the use of the preachers."

2. *Wesley recommended reading as a cure for superficial preaching.* John Trembath was, for a few years, one of the most popular of the lay preachers. Naturally fluent, and inclined to be bouncing and vain, the applause of the people spoilt him. Wesley wrote to him in 1760: "What has hurt you in times past, nay, and I fear to this day, is want of reading. I scarce ever knew a preacher read so little.

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* In "The Temple Classics."

† "Methodist Recorder," April 3, 1902.

‡ Ibid, January 23, 1902.

And perhaps by neglecting it you have lost the taste for it. Hence your talent in preaching does not increase. It is just the same as it was seven years ago: it is lively, but not deep: there is little variety: there is no compass of thought. Reading only can supply this, with meditation and daily prayer. It is for your life. There is no other way; else you will be a trifler all your days, and a pretty, superficial preacher. Do justice to your own soul; give it time and means to grow."

John Trembath did *not* take this counsel, and finally gave up preaching, and became a sporting farmer and smuggler. He repented in his last days, and wrote to Wesley: "Though God has forgiven me, yet I cannot forgive myself for the precious time I have wasted, the years I have lost, and the glorious harvest I have neglected."

So not all of Wesley's preachers profited alike by his pungent advice. Dr. Rigg* has pointed out that there were two widely contrasted styles of Methodist preachers and preaching in Wesley's day, "though there was a common element of power which belonged in a good measure to many of the most inferior specimens, as well as to preachers of the highest class." Wesley granted that, in the scholastic sense, many of them were "unlettered men," and owns that he had at first a prejudice against their preaching; but he says in his *Appeals*, "we could not but own that God gave wisdom from above to these unlearned and ignorant men, so that the work of the Lord prospered in their hands, and sinners were daily converted to God." On the other hand, he maintained that in the one thing they professed to know they were not ignorant men. "I trust there is not one of them who is not able to go through such an examination in substantial, practical, experimental divinity as few of our candidates for holy orders, even in the University (I speak it with sorrow and shame, and in tender love), are able to do."

3. *Wesley conducted classes for systematic reading.* During Lent, in 1749, seventeen lay preachers assembled at Kingswood. They were divided into two classes. To one class he read Pearson on the Creed; to the other Aldrich's *Logic*, not yet translated. He read to both his own *Rules for Action and Utterance*, in which *gesture* is de-

* Scenes and Studies in the Ministry of our Lord; with Thoughts on Preaching." (London: Charles H. Kelly. 5s.)

fined as "the silent language of your face and hands." A year later, detained by the tide at a Welsh ferry, he sat down in a cottage for three or four hours, and translated Aldrich's *Logic* from the Latin, and it became a Kingswood school-book. The lay preachers were apt pupils of the Oxford tutor. In 1764 he writes: "Many pupils I had at the University, and I took some pains with them. But to what effect? What is become of them now? How many of them think either of their tutor or their God? But, blessed be God, I have had some pupils since who will reward me for my labour. Now I live, for ye stand fast in the Lord."

4. *Wesley advised reading according to a plan.* "When I recommend to anyone a method or scheme of study, I do not barely consider this or that book separately, but in conjunction with the rest. The interposing of other books between these, until you have read them through, is not good husbandry. Do not ramble, however learned the persons may be that advise you so to do. This does indulge curiosity, but does not minister to real improvement, as a stricter method would do. . . . I advise you again, keep to your plan (though this implies continual self-denial) if you would improve your understanding to the highest degree of which it is capable."

5. *Wesley had occasion to warn a few—only a few—of his preachers against too much reading.* Joseph Benson was one of these. In a letter of 1770 Wesley writes to him: "Many persons are in danger of reading too little: you are in danger of reading too much." And, again, he gives him a caution, "rarely wanted," as Southey says: "Beware you be not swallowed up in books! An ounce of love is worth a pound of knowledge!" But Benson's studious habits did not prevent him from being a powerful evangelist. Wesley was alive to the danger of literary attainments sometimes producing pedantry and a supercilious attitude towards the illiterate—a fault from which he was himself entirely free. Writing to a refined and well-educated lady, he says: "I have found some of the uneducated poor who have exquisite taste and sentiment; and many, very many, of the rich who have scarcely any at all. But I do not speak of this. I want you to converse more, abundantly more, with the poorest of the people, who, if they have not taste, have souls, which you may forward in the way to heaven." In his letters to be found in that rare store-

house, *The Remains of Alexander Knox*, there are wise suggestions to a man of Knox's fine literary taste and philosophic habit.

6. *Wesley provided his preachers and people with suggestive lists and cheap editions of choice books.* In the *Minutes of Conference*, 1745, there is an interesting list of books to be kept for the preachers' use at London, Bristol, and Newcastle. A portion of the London library is now at Richmond College; but these books were probably intended for the better educated of the preachers. They are arranged thus: I. Divinity: practical and doctrinal. II. Physick. III. Natural Philosophy. IV. Astronomy. V. History. VI. Poetry. VII. Latin Prose and Verse. VIII. Greek Prose and Verse. IX. Hebrew. The next year a less elaborate list appears for the younger lay preachers and assistants, who are urged to regard themselves still as students, for whom "a method of study is expedient in the highest degree."

First of all stands *The Bible.* Wesley's *Notes on the New Testament*, based on the work of Bengel, is of permanent value. He anticipated the Revisers of 1881 in adopting the paragraph form. A comparison of Wesley's text of 1754 with the Revised Version of 1881 yields interesting results. In the first seven chapters of St. Matthew alone, 113 alterations made by Wesley agree in whole or part with those of the Revisers. Of these thirty-seven are in the spelling of names, three are in the margin of the Revised Version, and seventy-three are in the text. James Hervey said in a letter to Wesley in 1754, "Many expositions are too corpulent, yours are rather too lean." Those who know Hervey's florid style will be thankful that they are not required to read "corpulent" notes by him. But Wesley's aim is expressed in one of his letters: "If you would save yourself the trouble of thinking, add Mr. Henry's comment; if you would be only assisted in thinking, add the Explanatory Notes." Wesley's last important publication, 1790, was a pocket edition of a paragraph New Testament, with a good analysis of the books and chapters, in which he anticipated many of Dean Trench's happiest suggestions for improved readings.

Next to the Bible comes Devotional or "Practical" divinity. De Quincey classified books as belonging to either the literature of knowledge or the literature of power. There are books to which we turn for facts; they inform us; there are books to which we turn "for joy, purity and peace, strength and patience; they inspire us. The literature of

knowledge needs to be re-edited; corrected every century or decade. The literature of power is immortal." The devotional books recommended by Wesley belong to the literature of power. Here are some of them, translated or republished by Wesley; they are in his list of 1746: à Kempis's *Imitation of Christ*, Augustine's *Confessions*, Scougal's *The Life of God in the Soul of Man*, Law's *Serious Call* and *Christian Perfection*, Pascal's *Thoughts*, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Baxter's *Call to the Unconverted*, Edwards on *The Religious Affections*. These books are immortal.

A Kempis's *Christian Pattern* had profoundly influenced Wesley himself. He says that the providence of God directed him to this book, which had been his father's favourite, "his great and old companion." "I saw that simplicity of intention and purity of affection—one *design* in all we speak and do, and one *desire* ruling all our tempers—are indeed the wings of the soul, without which she can never ascend to God. I sought after this from that hour." It was several years after this that Wesley passed "from the faith of a servant to the faith of a son," but from this time he began to aim at and to pray for inward holiness. Dr. Rigg sees here the doctrine of entire Christian consecration and holiness which afterwards developed into the Methodist doctrine of Christian perfection. Although Wesley came to see the defects of à Kempis's work—"its tone of despondent sadness, its excessive self-absorption"—he never ceased to hold it in high esteem, and to commend it to his people and preachers. He was dissatisfied with Dean Stanhope's translation, and published an edition which he claimed was "a closer translation of the original than any hitherto published, and divided like the Latin, into distinct sentences." His first edition is dated 1735. He published an abridgment in 1741, which was "sold at eightpence."* A few years later he said in the *Minutes*, "The Societies are not half supplied with books, not even with Kempis, which ought to be in every house." His preachers, as their memoirs show, read and quoted from it. It fed the devotional fire in the soul of Thomas Walsh. It was, next to the Bible, the favourite book of John Fletcher.

We need à Kempis to-day. We are, perhaps, so little in danger of

* Still published, in a cheap edition, by the Book-Room.

asceticism and introspection that even its tendencies in that direction can scarcely harm us. Not only may à Kempis deepen devotion,—his main use,—but what could be more suggestive to a preacher than his reflections on "Christ's speaking inwardly to the faithful soul" in the simple words and profound thought, "I am the way, the truth, and the life"? This is Wesley's rendering of à Kempis:

Without the *way* there is no going aright, without the *truth* there is no *knowledge*, without *life* there is no *living*.

I AM the Way which thou oughtest to follow; the Truth which thou oughtest to trust; the Life which thou oughtest to hope for.

I AM the Way inviolable, the Truth infallible, the true Life, which cannot end.

I AM the most straight *Way*, the supreme *Truth*, the true *Life*, yea the blessed Life, the uncreated Life.

If thou remain in my *way*, thou shalt know the *truth*, and the truth shall make thee free, and thou shalt lay hold on everlasting life.

Wesley included Pascal's *Thoughts* in his book-lists, and published a translation of it in his Christian Library. Dean Church has well said: "If ever there were days which needed the bracing, sobering lessons of Pascal, they are ours. We need him to infuse real sobriety and seriousness amid the exciting influences of modern civilisation. We need the tonic of his stern truths. His austere thoroughness and masculine plainness of speech is very useful to remind us when on our knees, that neither life nor religion are the easy and soft things we sometimes take them to be."

Taylor's *Holy Living* and *Holy Dying* are also in the Christian Library, especially designed for the use of the preachers. Wesley tells us that he was deeply affected by reading Taylor. "I resolved to dedicate all my life to God—all my thoughts and words and actions—being thoroughly convinced that there was no medium." Another result of reading Taylor was the commencement of the famous Journals. These now occupy a well recognised place in literature, but they were the outcome of Wesley's spiritual resolve to make a more careful use of all his time, and to keep an account of its employment. Wesley, it is true, rejected Taylor's morbid teaching as to the necessity of perpetual, sorrowful uncertainty concerning personal salvation, as a letter to his

mother shows: "If we dwell in Christ and He in us, certainly we must be sensible of it. If we can never have any certainty of our being in a state of salvation, good reason it is that every moment should be spent, not in joy but in fear and trembling, and then undoubtedly we are in this life of all men most miserable. God deliver us from such a fearful doctrine as this." Here in 1725 we have the basis of the doctrine which Wesley learned, through experience, thirteen years later. Taylor's defects did not blind Wesley to his excellences, nor should they repel us to-day. Some readers will find delight in his glowing style, which Hazlitt says "unfolds the colours of the rainbow, floats like a bubble through the air, or is like innumerable dewdrops that glitter on the face of morning and twinkle as they glitter." Taylor's words are as "apples of gold in filigree work of silver."

On William Law and his works much has been well said and written lately by Canon Overton and Dr. Whyte. Wesley published cheap editions of Law's *Christian Perfection* and *Serious Call* in 1743-4. These two powerful devotional treatises did not contain the mystical errors of Law's later teaching, and Wesley never followed him into what he calls "the unfathomable confusions" of Behmen, but he never lost his admiration for the *Serious Call*. A short time before his death he spoke of it as "a treatise which will hardly be excelled, if it be equalled, in the English tongue, either for beauty of expression or for justice and depth of thought." George Whitefield and Charles Wesley were equally impressed by it. The later evangelicals who would not accept the name of "Methodists" felt its power. Henry Venn read it in 1750, and framed his life by it. Thomas Scott, the commentator, as the result of reading it, dedicated his life anew to God. Dr. Johnson, in his old age, said that when he went to Oxford he took up Law's *Call to a Holy Life*, expecting to find it a dull look; "but I found Law an overmatch for me, and this was the first occasion of my thinking in earnest of religion, after I became capable of rational inquiry." Dr. Whyte has recently urged the readers of his exhaustive lecture on William Law to "buy that great book, and read it at least once every year till you are ready to be taken where the seraphic author now is."

Scougal's *The Life of God in the Soul of Man* is a remarkable book which profoundly influenced all the Oxford Methodists. The

Rev. D. Butler, M.A., of Abernethy, in a recent book on Scougal,* maintains that the early origin of the Methodist movement was largely due to the teaching and example of this young Scottish saint. His treatise was read in the Epworth Rectory and recommended to John Wesley by his mother as "an excellent good book," "an acquaintance of mine many years ago." A copy of it, given to George Whitefield by Charles Wesley, led to the spiritual awakening and conversion of the great field-preacher. There are many passages in the writings of the Wesleys that reveal its influence. It stands *first* on the book-list of 1746. It had been published by Wesley in 1744, and five editions followed.

Space fails us for notes on Augustine, Bunyan, Baxter, Jonathan Edwards, Joseph Alleine, and the memoirs of Brainerd and Halyburton, all of which Wesley published in small volumes. And we may pass over his lists of books on Philosophy, History, and Science, most of which are, confessedly, superseded by the modern "literature of knowledge."

But the poetry recommended by Wesley in his letters and lists can never be out of date—Spenser, Shakespeare, Herbert, Milton. Who will say that these are not "among the living influences around us and within us"? Wesley also placed Sir John Davies's name on his lists. His philosophic poem on *The Immortality of the Soul* is not well known to-day. It may be found in the first volume of the Elizabethan poetry published by the Parker Society; and George Macdonald, in his *England's Antiphon*, quotes the following as "a fine invocation":

"O Light, which mak'st the light which makes the day!
Which sett'st the eye without, and mind within;
Lighten my spirit with one clear heavenly ray,
Which now to view itself doth first begin.

. . . . .

Thou, like the sun, dost, with an equal ray,
Into the palace and the cottage shine;
And show'st the soul both to the clerk and lay,
By the clear lamp of th' oracle divine."

THOS. E. BRIGDEN.

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* "Henry Scougal and the Oxford Methodists." (Blackwood.)

# Wesley's Hymn Books:

## His Provision for Public Worship.

AT a very early period of his career, Wesley began to avail himself of the help of the Press, of which he afterwards made such remarkable use in carrying out his great mission. When at Oxford, in 1733, he published his first work, "A Collection of Forms of Prayer for every Day in the Week," designed for the use of his pupils. This was followed in the next year by "A Treatise on Christian Prudence," extracted from Dr. Norris's work on that subject. In the following year, 1735, appeared his beautiful octavo edition of "The Christian's Pattern," Wesley's own translation from Thomas à Kempis's original work, of which an exquisite little pocket edition also was published in the same year; he likewise printed "Advice to a Young Clergyman," a work left in manuscript by his father; and at least one sermon was issued this year.

In 1736 Wesley went to Georgia, and there, in the following year, issued his first Hymn Book, entitling it "A Collection of Psalms and Hymns." Whilst he was on his voyage to Georgia he commenced the study of the German language, that he might be able to converse with a number of Germans, his fellow-passengers. In a most interesting little pocket-diary, kept by Wesley during his stay in Georgia, and happily preserved to this day, he wrote his first attempts to translate some of the German hymns. They appear in his handwriting, and with his own corrections. (For an account of this little book, see the "Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society" Vol. 1.) Some of these translations are in the Charlestown Hymn Book; amongst them being, "O Jesu, Source of calm repose," and "Thou Lamb of God, Thou Prince of Peace." This volume, most of the contents of which

were taken from the English psalm and hymn books, was designed for use by his congregations chiefly in public worship; a few of the hymns in the collection could be used only in private, not being suitable in form for singing, or for public use. Only one copy of the original edition of this book is known to be in existence; but it has been re-published.

Soon after his return to England, Wesley prepared and published a second Hymn Book, also entitled, as the former, "A Collection of Psalms and Hymns." This was probably designed to be used in worship by the Societies in London and elsewhere with which he was connected. It is dated 1738. Of this book only two copies have been preserved, and it has not yet been re-produced. In 1739 a volume was published by John and Charles Wesley (the first of their joint publications) entitled "Hymns and Sacred Poems," in which were the first printed hymns written by Charles Wesley. Three other books were afterwards issued bearing the same title; but these were not designed for public worship.

The third volume prepared by Wesley for public use bore the same title as the two former ones—"A Collection of Psalms and Hymns." It was published in 1741. This volume was destined to be of considerable practical utility in the Methodist congregations for more than a century. It was re-printed as late as 1825, but when the Supplement of the large Hymn Book was issued in 1831 the use of "Psalms and Hymns," which had undergone some alterations, gradually ceased; although little more than fifty years ago it was still in use in a few congregations. Of the 160 hymns in this collection only a few are unsuitable for public worship.

In 1742 Wesley issued a small "Collection of Hymns" intended for the use of the poor who could not afford to purchase the larger books. It contained twenty-four of the choicest of his own translations and of Charles's compositions, taken from the first of the four volumes of "Hymns and Sacred Poems" just mentioned, and was sold for 2d. Probably this was used in the smaller meetings of the Society, in the Class and the Band meetings, but not in the public congregations. It does not appear to have been issued in large numbers. It was sometimes called "The German Hymns," as so many were taken from the German translations.

During the next ten years a number of Hymn-tracts were published, consisting of original hymns on the great Christian festivals. They were frequently bound together and called "Festival Hymns." Wesley expressed a wish that these hymns should always be at hand wherever he preached on any of these festivals. One tract entitled "Redemption Hymns," or more fully "Hymns for those that seek and those that have Redemption in the Blood of Jesus Christ," was much in demand.

The increasing number of the congregations rendered it necessary to prepare another book for their use, especially as the three previous books named did not contain Charles Wesley's effective presentations of the great doctrines which were the favourite topics of the preachers —the all-important doctrines of Redemption, which were so prominently brought forward during the spiritual reformation that was in progress. Wesley accordingly prepared a choice selection, mainly from his brother's hymns, which would meet the requirements of the growing work, and set aside the necessity for the use of so many small books. To this fourth book he gave the title "Hymns and Spiritual Songs: intended for the use of Real Christians of all Denominations." It was first issued in 1753. Like all the hymn books, it was duodecimo in size, and it contained nearly 120 hymns. It passed through a large number of editions, being a general favourite, and was continued in use till the "large" Hymn Book appeared in 1780. It is a choice little volume.

One or two more small hymn books were published, each containing some of the beautiful compositions from Charles Wesley's prolific pen, and in 1761 a fifth book specially designed for the congregations was produced. It was entitled "Select Hymns: with Tunes Annext. Designed chiefly for the use of the people called Methodists." Wesley had for twenty years, he tells us, striven to provide a Tune Book according to his own wish; and, having at length succeeded, he issued it with what he considered to be "some of the best hymns" he and his brother had published, and he urged its use preferably to all others. Ten editions of the hymns and four of the tunes were circulated during Wesley's life.

After the appearance of this volume several hymn books of different sizes and on different subjects were given to the public. Of these the principal were "Short Hymns on Select Passages of Scripture,"

"Hymns for Children," "Hymns for Families," "Hymns on the Trinity." But none of these was intended for use in the congregations.

It will be obvious that considerable inconvenience would arise from the use of such a variety of books. In the well-known preface to the large Hymn Book, Wesley tells us that, when he was urged to prepare a book that would be generally useful in all the congregations, he judged it to be needless, as he and his brother had, during the preceding forty years, published so many hymn books and of so great variety. It was replied that "such a publication was highly needful on that very account, for the greater part of the people, being poor, are not able to procure so many books"; and, moreover, "they that have purchased them are, as it were, bewildered in the immense variety." He reminded them that they had such a book as they desired in "Hymns and Spiritual Songs." But this, they said, was too small, and did not contain a sufficient variety of hymns. He, therefore, gave his attention to the subject, and from more than forty different books already published by him he compiled, in 1780, his sixth book, the grand book entitled "Hymns for the Use of the People called Methodists," which has been so great a blessing, not only to them for whom it was specially prepared, but to all the Protestant Churches throughout the world. It is an unequalled body of Christian song, and it at once introduced the highest model the Church had known of hymnological writing, lifting the standard of that writing to the highest plane. It has become a bond of union between all the various Methodist Churches in every part of the world; and it has silently ministered to a deeper union of spirit in all the Protestant Churches, amongst whom it has nourished the spiritual life in very high degree.

But Wesley did not end his efforts even in the production of his majestic work. In 1785, being then above eighty years of age, he was induced to publish a "Pocket Hymn Book for the Use of Christians of all Denominations," containing a number of hymns for which there was not room in the large Hymn Book. But a bookseller presently issued a similar work, in which a large number of hymns taken from Wesley's volumes were mixed with many of a much inferior, even doggerel, character. This book had a considerable sale amongst the Methodists, particularly in the northern societies. To counteract this,

Wesley issued a most beautiful little volume, having the same title as the last. It contained 250 carefully selected hymns, divided into sections and sub-sections, and numbered and named precisely as in the large book. Though now but slightly known, it was much valued then, and passed into no less than 14 editions before the end of the century.

In 1784 "A Collection of Psalms and Hymns for the Lord's Day" was published; but this was merely a selection from an enlarged edition of the 1741 book. Thus it will be seen that this book was issued concurrently with the large Hymn Book and that it was in use for upwards of 100 years. It met Wesley's idea of a Hymn Book for congregational use, he desiring his preachers to select for public worship hymns of praise and thanksgiving rather than hymns descriptive of religious states.

The Methodist Churches may well be congratulated on the possession of so inestimable a treasure of Christian song. Probably the riches of that treasury will be more fully exhibited in the new revision of the Hymn Book now under process than by any other single publication hitherto made.

RICHARD GREEN.

# John Wesley as a Musician.

BOTH the brothers Wesley were good musicians. Charles had a truly musical soul. Though convinced that the true end of music was to minister to spiritual edification, he was nevertheless conscious that music had a kingdom and language of its own, and believed that constant watchfulness was necessary to maintain it in loyal allegiance to the Great King.

> "Still let us on our guard be found,
> And watch against the power of sound
> With sacred jealousy,
> Lest haply sense should damp our zeal,
> And music's charms bewitch and steal
> Our hearts away from Thee."

John Wesley, whether because he held his passions under severer control, or because he was naturally of a less musical temperament, does not appear to have realised with equal intensity the seductive power of sound. To him music was always ancillary.

His views on the subject are set forth with engaging frankness and characteristic assurance in "Thoughts on the Power of Music," a brief pamphlet published in 1789. With the ostensible object of conducting a calm and judicial inquiry into the causes of the decline of power in modern music, he doubtless really purposes to issue a manifesto to his followers on the true province of music in relation to his own churches.

He defines the sphere of music as "to raise various passions in the human mind." But its moving power, in his judgment, lies in melody, which, to produce its highest effects, needs to be united to appropriate words. Its decline in emotional power, he avers, is contemporaneous with the rise of the study of harmony, which has changed both the nature and the design of music. "The ancient composers studied

melody alone; and due arrangement of single notes; and it was by melody alone that they wrought such wonderful effects. But the modern composers study harmony, which, in the present sense of the word, is quite another thing, namely, a contrast of various notes, opposite to and blended with each other, wherein they

"Now high, now low, pursue the resonant fugue."

The result of this is that music appeals rather to the intellect than to the emotions. "What," he cries, "has counterpoint to do with the passions? It is applied to the ear, to the imagination, or internal sense. It no more affects the passions than the judgment."

The introduction of polyphony has for him two further baleful results. It has made music so independent of words that it either altogether discards them, as in instrumental music, or allows different words to be sung by different voices at one and the same time. "Artificial sounds without any words at all," he thus disposes of: "What have any of the passions to do with this? What has judgment, reason, common-sense? Just nothing at all. All these are utterly excluded by delicate unmeaning sounds." But the other innovation, "appointing different words to be sung by different persons at the same time," quite rouses his ire. "It is glaringly, undeniably contrary to common-sense." To which of the sentences, he asks, is he to attend? And then proceeds: "This astonishing jargon has found a place even in the worship of God. It runs through (O pity! O shame!) the greatest part of even our Church music! It is found even in the finest of our Anthems and in the most solemn parts of our public worship. Let any impartial, any unprejudiced persons say whether there can be a more direct mocking of God."

From all this one might reasonably conclude that in music Wesley's range of sympathy was limited. Indeed, were criticism within the scope of this article it would not be difficult to show that Wesley's views are both aesthetically and psychologically faulty. But in truth, as his Journals conclusively show, he had really a much more catholic susceptibility than his "Thoughts on the Power of Music" would lead us to believe.

From instrumental music he on occasions derived both pleasure and profit. On Easter Sunday, 1751, worshipping at the new Church, Man-

chester, he found an uncommon blessing while the organist was playing the Voluntary, but he naïvely explains that it "was at a time I least expected it." The organ at Exeter Cathedral charmed him—"so large, beautiful, and finely toned." At Macclesfield, on Good Friday, 1782, he administered the Sacrament to about 1,300 persons. "While we were administering," he says, "I heard a low, soft, solemn sound just like that of an Æolian harp. It continued five or six minutes, and affected so many that they could not refrain from tears. It then died gradually away. Strange that no other organist (that I know) should think of this."

During the Anthem, again, he was sometimes deeply moved. On the visit to Exeter Cathedral already referred to, he speaks with much feeling of the music to "Glory be to God in the Highest," which, in his opinion, "exceeded the 'Messiah' itself." Incidentally this entry shows that he was familiar with Handel's masterpiece, and recognised its sublimity. With other oratorios of the same composer he must have had more or less acquaintance. He refers to his surprise when in 1774, preaching in the market-place of Ashbourne before abundance of people, they "mistook the tune and struck up the march in 'Judas Maccabæus.'" Probably by this he means not the march itself, but the martial "See the conquering hero comes." "I know not," says he, "when I have heard so agreeable a sound." It is significant alike of his pleasure and of his openness of mind that in the succeeding edition of his tune book "Sacred Harmony" "See the conquering hero comes" is the tune set to "Christ the Lord is risen to-day."

Wesley was also at the first performance of Dr. Arne's oratorio "Judith," which was given on February 29, 1764, in the Lock Chapel, of which the musical Martin Madan was minister. He found "some parts of it were exceedingly fine." But here he cannot resist the temptation of trotting out his hobby horse and running a-tilt of modern music; so he adds: "But there are two things in modern pieces of music which I never could reconcile to common sense. One is, singing the same words ten times over; the other singing different words by different persons at one and the same time. . . . This can never be defended by all the musicians in Europe, till reason is quite out of date."

According to his diary, a year later he was in the same Church listening to the oratorio "Ruth," which seemed to impress him even

more: "The sense was admirable throughout, and much of the poetry not contemptible. This joined with exquisite music might possibly make an impression even upon rich and honourable sinners." One is tempted to inquire whether in this case there can be a mistake of ten years in the date, and the "Ruth" referred to be the oratorio of that name which his precocious nephew Samuel composed when six years old, wrote down when eight, and which therefore might well be performed in 1775, when the little prodigy, now nine years of age, was the talk of musical London and the pet of the Rev. Martin Madan.

Wesley was interested also in noting the power of music upon animals. One or two references in his Journal are too quaint to be omitted:—

Dec. 31, 1764.—"I thought it would be worth while to make an odd experiment. Remembering how surprisingly fond of music the lion at Edinburgh was, I determined to try whether this was the case with all animals of the same kind. I accordingly went to the Tower with one who plays on the German flute. He began playing near four or five lions; only one of these (the rest not seeming to regard it at all) rose up, came to the front of his den, and seemed to be all attention. Meantime, a tiger in the same den started up, leaped over the lion's back, turned and ran under his belly, leaped over him again, and to and fro incessantly. Can we account for this by any principle of mechanism? Can we account for it at all?"

July 3, 1769.—"While we were singing at Coolylough, I was surprised to see the horses from all parts of the ground gathering about us. Is it true, then, that horses, as well as lions and tigers, have an ear for music?"

It would appear, then, that John Wesley was really more musical than he allowed himself to admit. But whatever his personal predilection, with him in music, as in so many other things, the practical was supreme. Music was a means to an end. As the language of the emotions it was of inestimable value to the Evangelist both to open up the heart for the reception of the truth, and then to afford expression for the sentiments awakened. For his great open-air gatherings melody was the only possible form of musical expression. Even to-day it is

ridiculous to expect that a large and miscellaneous congregation can be converted into a vast madrigal society. Further, the uncultured, who formed so large a proportion of the early Methodist societies, loved melody, but could not appreciate more elaborate music. When Wesley preached at Pebworth he records "a long anthem was sung; but I suppose none beside the singers could understand one word of it. Is not that 'praying in an unknown tongue?' I could no more bear it in any church of mine than Latin prayers!"

So he set himself to a task which he might hope to accomplish. He would infuse into his people his own love for the simple, dignified, plaintive tunes and chorales of Western Evangelical Christendom, and have them rendered with majestic effect. And herein he was justified not only by wisdom but by art. For, as Ruskin has well reminded us Evangelicals, while there is no need to admit either music or painting into religious services, yet if we admit either one or the other, we must see to it that it is not bad music or bad painting.

And in this purpose he was entirely successful. Not only at places under his more frequent supervision, such as London and Bristol, was the singing renowned, but in far-away Peel he hears singing not surpassed at either of these places; at Bolton he is delighted with the singing of the children; at Neath he hears the whole congregation in the room "singing with the spirit and the understanding also"; again, at Cowbridge that same afternoon, and so wherever he went. Indeed, by common consent, for congregational singing, united, exact, lusty, modest, brisk, and spiritual—qualities which his famous rules so strongly enjoin—the Methodist services were unrivalled.

FRED LUKE WISEMAN.

# John Wesley's Tunes.

AMONG the strange customs of the Holy Club few excited more derision than did their psalm-singing. Whatever zeal for congregational song had been kindled at the time of the Reformation had long since died out. In the parish churches the psalms were still "lined out," but their rendering awoke no interest in the congregation. The clerk with "execrable droning" went through the appointed staves; the people remained listlessly lolling in their seats. They had no heart for song, a reproach which religious etiquette covered by decreeing that to sing in church was not "good form."

But the Oxford Methodists were in dead earnest, and they felt the need of the language of deep feeling. So, despite the mockery of the irreligious and the scorn of fops, they spoke to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. After the departure of John Wesley their early zeal waned. When he returned, in 1738, he found that "prudence had made them leave off singing psalms," from which specious form of temptation he prays to be delivered. And truly that prayer was abundantly answered. His earnest quest of peace with God declared itself in penitential song. But when at a quarter to nine on May 24, 1738, in the little meeting at Aldersgate Street, he felt his heart "strangely warmed," a new song was there put into his mouth. On fire with new-found love and joy, he went across to his brother Charles, whose soul was already ablaze with the same emotions; and before they separated for the night they sang together the hymn in which Charles had celebrated his own conversion a few days before. Was it "And can it be that I should gain"? or was it?—

"Where shall my wandering soul begin?
How shall I all to heaven aspire?
A slave redeemed from death and sin,
A brand plucked from eternal fire,
How shall I equal triumphs raise,
Or sing my great Deliverer's praise?"

When, three years previously, George Whitefield had found peace with God, he, too, was so filled with joy that, as he records, he could not avoid singing psalms wherever he was.

So the Methodist revival was born in song. The Wesleys and their friends sang because they could not help singing. Song was the natural vehicle for the expression of the thoughts and feelings that possessed them. They realised the power, or, as Ruskin has it, "the great purpose of music, which is to say a thing that you mean deeply in the clearest and strongest possible way."

But what was there for them to sing? Truly not much that would be likely to satisfy such strong passion as theirs. They had, of course, the psalms and canticles of the Anglican Church, and Sternhold and Hopkins' metrical version of the Psalms. But the latter was hardly to their mind. It was unevangelical, cold and uncouth. And though John Wesley acknowledges that on one occasion God answered the thoughts of his heart by the stanzas of Thomas Sternhold sung after the sermon, he significantly adds that it was "in a manner that I did not expect." In general he found this version "miserable, scandalous doggerel." Nor was it to be expected that Charles Wesley, whose every nerve was a delicately tuned harpstring, and whose passion could only be satisfied when it swept every chord, would be content with the twang and jingle of that three-stringed lyre. They must have ampler scope, more varied measure, more fervid strain.

What, then, were they to do? And more, what were their ever-increasing converts, born in the same fire, to do? They could indeed solace themselves with the morning and evening hymns of Bishop Ken, and other suitable selections of his *Christian Year*; Vaughan and Herbert might serve them somewhat, Mason would be more to their liking, and Watts had poured out the treasure of his fervent evangelical spirit for their comfort and delight. Again, they might have recourse to the

rich treasury of German spiritual song, with which their Moravian associations had made them familiar. But the latter was in a tongue not understanded of the people; and the English hymns in both doctrine and experience still left something to seek.

So the Wesleys were thrown on their native resources. Well for us that they were. Their output has a greater percentage of pure metal to the amount of ore produced than that of any of their predecessors or contemporaries, and withal it is of finer quality. John Wesley set to work to translate his favourite German hymns; and his verses, packed with evangelical doctrine and feeling, sometimes stately and sonorous, again tender and suppliant, yet again joyful and triumphant, always restrained and reverent, are, and will remain, the backbone of Methodist psalmody.

As for Charles Wesley, his exuberant spirit could not be held in check. He was more prolific of hymns than Solomon of proverbs, and his survey covered almost as wide a field. In metre familiar and strange, with a fidelity to the thought and even to the words of Scripture that could only result from long, close, and loving study, with a freshness and buoyancy that never fail to exhilarate, and an artlessness and sincerity that disarm criticism and charm even where they fail to convince, he poured forth an almost continuous stream of verse, to illustrate, proclaim, and exult in

> "The length, and breadth, and depth, and height,
> Of love divine, which never ends!"

To find appropriate music with which to wed such strongly emotional verse would seem a task of no small difficulty. Indeed, it is to be doubted if the tunes of the Methodists have proved quite equal to their hymns.

But some good music was ready for Wesley's immediate use. If the words of the metrical psalms were not to his mind, many of the tunes to which they were sung were simple, strong, and persuasive. Already several books of psalms tunes and anthems had been issued. Earliest and chief among composers for the English Church service was:

"A worthy wyght
Who for long tyme in musick bore the bell;
His name to shew was THOMAS TALLIS hyght,
In honest vertuous lyff he dyd excell."

With his pupil William Birde he issued á collection of hymns and other compositions. John Day, too, had added to his "certaine notes," "divers godly praiers and psalms." Farrant also had composed his tunes; Este and Ravenscroft had issued their psalters. Before "departing to that blessed place where only his harmony can be exceeded," Henry Purcell had left behind him the rich legacy of his music, and Dr. Croft had contributed melodies that will be sung as long as Protestantism lives.

So, from the first, whether they were conducting a meeting of the Society or preaching in the open air, the Wesleys could carry home to the hearts of the people the words of their new hymns on the wings of the widely known and well beloved psalm tunes of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Farrant and Tallis, St. Magnus, St. Matthew, St. Mary, Bedford, York, Winchester Old, Irish, and many other strong and devout common metre tunes were ready for their use. Of short metres they had not so good a selection. For long metre Angels' Song and Tallis' Canon might be relied on. While an excursion into 10's and 11's, 6-8's of either form, or Trumpet metre, would find the people prepared to join in the song.

But the old psalm tunes were not their only resource. Following the example of Luther and the leaders of the Reformation, the Wesleys did not hesitate to harness to their chariot of song such secular melody as they thought would help their cause. Many of the plaintive old English folk-songs were thus pressed into service. Nor, if tradition may be trusted, was aid of more recent days eschewed. The story goes that on an early visit to Cornwall, Charles Wesley while preaching was interrupted by a gang of half-drunken sailors on the look-out for a spree, who invaded the ring of his hearers bawling a famous music-hall song of the period called "Nancy Dawson." The preacher stopped his sermon, and addressing himself to his interrupters, told them he liked the tune, but cared not for the words. He then offered to conclude the

service, and to go home and write some new words to their tune, if they would meet him at such a time later and sing their tune to his words. The bargain was struck. Charles Wesley wrote his hymn, and by-and-by to the sailors' melody they were all singing a hymn inviting song in praise of Jesus as "the soul of music," setting forth the cardinal Methodist doctrines, and incidentally justifying the preacher for such use of secular song.

"Come let us try if Jesu's love
Will not as well inspire us;
This is the theme of those above,
This upon earth should fire us.
. . . .

"Who of His love doth once partake,
He evermore rejoices;
Melody in our hearts we make,
Melody in our voices."

If the reader would like to hear the song "Nancy Dawson," let him sing the well known children's ditty, "Here we go round the mulberry-bush," and he will be practically rendering its first four lines.

Such material then was already to hand. But though serviceable and excellent in quality, it was neither varied nor vivacious enough for the use of Methodists. As early as 1742 John Wesley strove to supply his people's want by publishing *A Collection of Tunes Set to Music as they are commonly Sung at the Foundery*. It is a quaint little book, containing thirty-nine tunes; only the melody is given, written sometimes in the treble and sometimes in the tenor clef. It includes most of the tunes already mentioned, but reveals a third source whence many of the finest of the old Methodist tunes were drawn.

Through his association with the Moravians, Wesley had been introduced not only to the hymns, but also to the magnificent chorales of the Fatherland. From this fountain of living water he often drew. The first Methodist tune book significantly opens with a German tune, and nearly one-third out of the small number the book contains are from the same source.

But the book is valuable rather to the antiquarian than the musician. It bears signs of haste in compilation and execution, and is full of musical and typographical errors.

To form a correct opinion on the psalmody of the early days one must turn to Wesley's next tune book, which he published in 1761. Its title was *Select Hymns with Tunes Annext, designed chiefly for the use of the People called Methodists.* The 149 hymns which comprise the book are preceded by the tunes, 115 in number, under the title of *Sacred Melody.* Bound up with the volume is Wesley's "Grounds of Vocal Music," and at the end are printed his well known directions for singing.

The characteristic preface ought to be quoted in its entirety, as a fitting companion to the inimitable preface to the Hymn Book now in use. But one paragraph must suffice. Wesley sets out with praising Butts' *Harmonia Sacra* for its selection, harmony, and get up; but complains it is expensive (it cost 6s. 6d.), and not convenient to carry. He wants "the *best hymns* which we have printed; and that in a *small and portable* volume and one of an *easy price.*" Then he proceeds:

"I have been endeavouring for more than twenty years to procure such a book as this. But in vain; Masters of Music were above following any direction but their own. And I was determined, whoever compiled this, should follow my direction: not *mending* our tunes, but setting them down, neither better nor worse than they were. At length I have prevailed. The following collection contains all the tunes which are in *common use* among us. They are pricked true, exactly as I desire all our congregations may sing them; and here is prefixt to them a collection of those hymns which are (I think) some of the *best* we have published. The volume likewise is *small*, as well as the *price.* This therefore I recommend preferable to all others.

"JOHN WESLEY."

This book, therefore, is the law and testimony to which appeal must be made. Copies, indeed, are very scarce; but a reprint of a later edition of the book under the title of *Sacred Harmony* is still on sale at the Book-Room. It contains practically the same tunes as *Sacred Melody*, with the addition of a figured bass and one or two tunes of the nature of hymn-anthems, such as old "Denmark" and "Vital Spark."

To *Sacred Melody*, then, we now turn for the characteristics of early Methodist psalmody. Most of the tunes of 1742 again find place, but

new springs have been discovered. The oratorios of Handel have been laid under contribution. Especially did the strong, simple marches of Handel suit our aggressive and high-spirited forefathers. "Handel's March" is Wesley's tune to "Soldiers of Christ, arise." Old "Salisbury" is in the book, but is set to "Glory be to God on high"; and "Christ the Lord is risen to-day," from which it now seems to be indissoluble, is significantly set in *Sacred Harmony* to "See the conquering hero comes."

But by this time the revival has produced musicians as well as poets. "What are you to do," said Mr. Rich to John Wesley, "with a musician at the theatre who has given up all for Christ?" "Let him write tunes for the Methodists," was the reply. And so J. F. Lampe, "sometime student of music at Helmstadt in Saxony," as he styles himself, bassoon player at Covent Garden Theatre, writer of burlesque and comic opera, author of an excellent manual on thorough bass, set to work to write music for the Methodists. His tunes became very popular, and sixteen of them are included in John Wesley's book. But they are rarely used now. They belong emphatically to the age in which they were produced. For the most part in lighter vein, and written for Charles Wesley's peculiar metres, they did much to pave the way for the more florid style that became common in Methodism of the middle period.

Thirty-five of the tunes, or nearly a third of the whole, are in the minor. This fact seems to contravene the current notion of the bright and joyous character of old Methodist psalmody. But it must not be forgotten that nearly one fifth of all the hymns in John Wesley's hymn-book are penitential. For such, indeed, the minor scale is well adapted. But it is by no means necessarily and exclusively sad. Whilst it can assuredly sob and wail and plead, it can also march and strive and exult. Some of our finest marches are in the minor. "Leoni" is a minor tune. So is the old Scotch song "Charlie is my darling." Lampe uses the scale for some of his liveliest melodies. In *Sacred Melody*, "Who in the Lord confide," "God of all redeeming grace," "Happy the man that finds the grace," and even "My God, I am Thine," are all set to minor tunes! It must, however, be acknowledged that words are occasionally set to tunes without regard to their sentiment.

Both hymns and tunes are arranged in order of metre, or of the number of syllables in the first line. Thus the book opens with 5. 5. 12.;

then follow hymns with first line of six syllables, then of seven, and so on. In this way Dr. Green's pathetic tune "Brentford," appropriately set to "Thou very Paschal Lamb," is made to do duty also for the next hymn in the book, which happens to be "Come, ye that love the Lord"!

The tunes, whether in major or minor mode, are simple in structure, strong, melodious, and charged with restrained emotion. As the last quality would suggest, a large number, in fact nearly a half of the collection, are in triple time. An occasional flourish of many notes to one syllable is found, but generally the melody proceeds quietly and steadily to its conclusion.

Quite frequently the last line repeats as a kind of coda. Very occasionally the half-line. Oh, venerable founder! how could you allow in print,

"Grateful unceas
Grateful unceasing sacrifice"?

Refrains are confined to the addition of "Hallelujahs," which appear at the end of "Praise ye the Lord, ye immortal Quire," and also—strangely significant of early Methodist sentiment with regard to death—at the end of "Happy soul, thy days are ended."

Into this book we look in vain for any of the tunes usually spoken of as "Old Methodist Tunes." These seem to have come into vogue later. They bear many signs of the development or degeneration—the predilection of the reader must determine which is the right description—usually accompanying mediævalism. The boisterous character of many of them, the frequent repetition of the lines, the long rigmarole on one syllable, were hardly to Wesley's taste. With such vocal calisthenics he would probably have been as impatient as with "the long quavering Hallelujah annexed to the Morning Song tune," which he defies any man to sing devoutly, and would have stopped them as summarily as he did the "tune fit for an opera" which the members of the Warrington choir on one occasion desired to render.

What he insisted upon, and what this tune book undoubtedly emphasises, is the effect of simple melody to move a congregation. Harmony he deprecated, as tending to take off the attention of the con-

gregation, and to open the door to "the secret pride, the subtle sin." He enforced his doctrine with greater insistence when he found from Dr. Pepusch that harmony was of late origin, and that in insisting on melody he was maintaining a custom of the primitive Church. At any rate, by concentrating all the attention upon melody, urging all to sing only the melody, taking pains that they should all sing and sing with expression, he managed, according to not too friendly critics of his day, to draw to his services by the singing ten times as many as by the sermon.

FRED. LUKE WISEMAN.

# Methodist Antiquities:

## Brief Notes on My Collection.

"ANTIQUITIES" seems a high-sounding word to use in relation to things which had their origin only two centuries ago. In this connection, however, it will be understood as applying to those books, documents, portraits, relics and sundries embraced under the more awkward term "Wesleyana."

I think I am indebted for my special interest in all that relates to John Wesley and his work to the fact that in my father's small library was a copy of Wesley's Journals, which contained as a frontispiece a portrait of Wesley, and a view of City Road Chapel. I was much interested in the Journals, and though I was but a youth, I was impressed with the ability and character of the man who evinced such amazing energy, and did so much good work. I well remember being impressed with the great difference between his personal appearance as depicted in that portrait, and that which in those days was the one with which all Methodists were familiar, as the frontispiece of our Hymn Book. Later on, when I had left school, I happened to see in the home of a friend a fine mezzotint after Romney's painting. The differences again struck me, and in a desire to obtain further varieties, lay the foundation of my collection, and now, for close upon half a century, I have pursued this hobby with more or less zeal, as I have had opportunity, and as the demands on my time and energies in other directions have allowed. Had I been as diligent in my search in the earlier years as I was later on, I might have acquired many precious things, as well as portraits, much more freely than was possible at a later time, when collectors increased in number and voracity, and when much larger prices had to be paid for anything worth pos-

sessing. There is now very great difficulty in procuring certain of the fine folio portraits of Wesley—indeed, it is all but impossible. My collection is, very probably, the most extensive in existence. I know of no other so complete. It contains over 400 portraits, all differing in variety, size, or some other particulars, and includes, so far as I know, with about two exceptions, all the finest and most valuable examples, not being "proofs."

The rise in prices of the better portraits, as well as of anything else relating to Wesley, in the last few years is remarkable. As a recent example of this, a portrait for which I gave five shillings some twenty-five years ago was recently offered to me by a London dealer for three and a-half guineas, and this is not a specially rare engraving. A small volume of poems by John Wesley's father, for which I paid ten shillings, appeared in a recent bookseller's catalogue at £7! Although an article is always worth what it will fetch, such prices seem to me to be absurd. The result is that anyone possessing anything relating to Wesley cherishes remarkable notions of its value. A lady recently offered a letter of John Wesley's, which, with some knowledge of the subject, I apprised at fifty shillings. She declined to sell under £12 10s. Of course she kept it. I think the American Methodists are largely responsible for some of these high figures. They were very hungry a few years back, but have lately rather moderated their appetite.

Several alleged portraits of Wesley have been offered to me at various times, which I was obliged to reject as being of some other person. On one occasion a London dealer sent me a beautiful miniature painted on ivory, mounted with gold rim and ring, representing a clergyman in gown and bands on one side, and a very artistic monogram "J. W." on the other. This he represented as John Wesley. At first sight I pronounced it not to be Wesley, and returned it. The owner sent it back with a positive assurance that I was mistaken, and some account of its history, etc. I again returned it, pointing out some details of dissimilarity, and expressing the positive opinion that I was right. But again it was sent back, with a fulsome statement of its great value and unique character, and with a written pedigree tracing it back to the month of June, 1767, when it was painted in London by a certain artist. In vain I pointed out that Wesley was

not in England in that year from the end of March till the end of July. My friend was not to be disconcerted by little discrepancies of that sort. Before finally returning the miniature I examined it with much care, and observed that the grain of the ivory on one side did not correspond with that on the other. This suggested that the panel was in two parts. With some difficulty I slipped off the gold rim that held the parts together, when it fell apart, disclosing the name of the clergyman, the date of the painting, and the name of the artist. The two latter were according to the pedigree, but it was not John Wesley.

Besides portraits of the Wesley family, I have in later years collected other things relating to Wesley and Methodism. My collection includes busts, medals, Wedgwood medallions, and cameos, autograph letters of the Wesleys, publications of Wesley and his father during their lives, letters and portraits of all the Presidents of the Conference from Wesley's time, class and band tickets, seals, Scripture playing-cards, trinkets, etc.

*Portraits.* Of these, forty are of folio size, twenty being fine mezzotints, six are from paintings by Royal Academicians. There are numerous varieties of the various types. One of the scarcest engravings is a small one after Williams's well-known painting, executed by John Downes, and referred to by Wesley in his Journal, under date Nov. 5, 1774. The size of the engraving is 4¼ins. by 2¾ins., and is dated 1745. The copy in my collection was published as a frontispiece to a third edition of the "Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion." The only other copy I know, is in the collection at the Wesleyan Book Room. Downes also engraved a larger plate, which was prefixed to Wesley's Notes on the New Testament. Another very scarce print is one engraved by Ridley, representing Wesley as he lay in his coffin. It is probably the most exact representation of Wesley's profile. There are two of these prints, the larger being the rarer one. Among the rarer portraits are the two earlier ones by George Vertue, the mezzotints after Russell, and Hunter and Tinney. These rare examples command high prices when offered for sale.

My collection of Busts comprises twenty-two of these representations of Wesley, in various material, colours, and sizes. Only two types of busts of John Wesley are recognised by collectors. One from the beautiful sculpture in marble by Roubilliac, whose work in West-

minster Abbey is well known. This bust is in the National Portrait Gallery. Reduced copies were very scarce, until a Potteries firm recently issued a rather smaller copy, of much merit. The other, the renowned model by Enoch Wood, of Burslem. Wood produced his bust in 1781. There were subsequent reproductions in common Staffordshire pottery, but in most cases Wood's fine work on his mould was spoiled by the glazing on the busts. The earliest glazed ones were issued in 1784, when Wesley's age was eighty-one years. A superior bust of this type was made in parian and basalt by Copelands, and by Wedgwood and others. A third type of bust exists, but I know of only one example of it, the one at Didsbury College, which I believe to be by Coade, but the evidence of this authorship is not quite conclusive.

The Medallions and Cameos comprise forty examples, all differing in model, size, colour, or shape. Most of them are Wedgwood ware, with two very scarce ones by Turner, and a few of other origin. One of the small ones by Enoch Wood is certified as having been carried for a long time in the pocket of Adam Clarke.

The Medals are twenty-four in number in silver, bronze, and white metal. The most important are the familiar 1839 Centenary medal, with the Centenary Hall on the reverse, and one of similiar size (2½ inches diam.) with the bust of Charles Wesley on the obverse, and a verse of a hymn on the reverse, "O for a trumpet voice," etc. My oldest medal is one struck in silver in 1789, with Wesley's bust on the obverse, and on the reverse the words, "The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance," while in the exergue is the date.

The Autograph Letters of the Wesleys include some by Samuel Wesley (father), John, and Charles, and Samuel the organist.

The Books and Pamphlets comprise many of the scarcer publications of Wesley during his life, very many being first editions; all the Hymn Books, except the original 1737 Charlestown edition. I know of only one copy of this, which was sold for £20 at a London book sale a few years ago. It is still in this country. I have also a number of the early Penny Minutes of Conference. These are now scarce. One of my treasures in this department is a first edition of the Rules of Society, dated February 23, 1742-3, and signed by John Wesley only. There are also some notable Anti-Methodist publications.

The President's Letters and Portraits are a very interesting set. Some of the earlier ones were collected by the late Dr. Punshon. They are complete to date, with one or more portraits of each President.

The Class and Band Tickets are also an interesting series. With the exception of a few band tickets they are complete for a hundred-and-fourteen years, with a number of earlier ones, and a few of the original picture tickets. It is now very difficult to find any of the earliest dates. The scarcity is, perhaps, largely due to a prevalent habit of those times, the depositing of the tickets of a deceased member in his coffin—not, we will hope, with any idea of their being in the nature of a passport to Paradise.

Of Trinkets and Articles of Personal Use Wesley had very few. He had, I think, four silver spoons. Where these now are I do not know, but during the formation of my collection, I have been offered as many as would furnish a fair family tea table, all "guaranteed" to have belonged to Wesley, and most with pedigrees accompanying them. He had one gold seal, which, by his will, he left to Elizabeth Ritchie, his friend and housekeeper. Besides this Wesley used two other seals at various periods of his life, which were probably of crystal, such as were in use at that period. The earliest has a dove with the olive branch, and the motto "Nuncio Pacis." The second represents a sun-flower turning to the sun, with a motto, "Tibi soli." The third has the initials, "J. W.," with the motto, "Believe, love, and obey." The second named was the gold seal left to Miss Ritchie. I have seen such a seal in the possession of a well-known Methodist, who believes that it is the actual seal Wesley used. I thought so, too, until after careful comparison with seals on Wesley's letters and one on Miss Ritchie's also, I found they were not exactly identical. The gold seal I saw was accompanied by such written credentials and history that I was at first misled. Of course, such articles were not made specially for Wesley. Probably he bought his seal as any other man might, and there must have been many similar in existence of the same design, though, possibly, not precisely similar in every detail.

J. WRIGHT.

# The Lament of a Collector.

WESLEY was extremely careful of all letters and papers of interest. Of the more important letters written by himself copies were preserved, often in his own handwriting. This habit he learned, probably, from his mother. Some of the most interesting of her letters are known to us only through copies made either by her husband's amanuensis or by her daughters, who all excelled in penmanship. When Wesley received a letter or copied one of his own, his habit was to endorse it with the name of the person whom it concerned, with the date, and sometimes with a comment on the contents. These endorsements are often now of great value. So also are the addresses and post-marks which appear on the backs of letters, there being no envelopes then in use. More than once Wesley tells us in his Journal that he has spent some time in "looking over" his letters and arranging them.

The same care he bestowed upon his diaries and Journals. The former, and sometimes the latter also, were written in small, leather-bound volumes, at first in a greatly abbreviated long-hand intermixed with signs, possibly inherited from his father, who used similar devices, or learned from Weston's "shorthand," which he seems to have taught some of his pupils at Oxford. More than half-way through his life in Georgia he abandoned this long-hand system, and, following the example of his brother Charles, adopted Dr. Byrom's shorthand.

The Journals were written from the diaries but contained much of which no trace can be discovered in the diaries. Those printed and published are only "Extracts." Would that all the omitted portions could be recovered! Quite recently one such section has unexpectedly come to light. It had been hidden in family archives

for generations. Possibly others may be discovered. We are not, however, sanguine, for a strange and disastrous fatality has pursued the Wesley MSS.

By his will Wesley committed all his books and papers to the charge of executors, whose instructions were to deal with them as they might think for the best. Unfortunately, John Pawson, who was not an executor, was the preacher resident in Wesley's house—a saintly man, but quite incapable of dealing with so precious a literary treasure. Without authority he commenced burning everything that to his narrow mind did not seem to be for the glory of God. Nearly all Wesley's papers of a classical or literary nature—including a copy of Shakespeare, fully annotated, and a number of Wesley's small manuscript books of untold interest and value, were cast to the flames. Richard Reece remonstrated in vain. Henry Moore, one of the executors, at the time was living in Bath. Tidings reached him of Pawson's illegal and reckless proceedings. He wrote angrily forbidding further destruction, and announcing his intention of coming at once to London to secure the unconsumed remainder. Pawson replied justifying his conduct partly on the foolish plea that some of the books destroyed were written in Wesley's contractions and shorthand. Happily, however, he pledged himself to arrest the burning process. Moore secured the precious residue, and made a fairly good use of the collection in his Life of Wesley, added to it copies of valuable correspondence supplied by Marriott and others, and finally left the whole to his friend and executor, Mr. Gandy. The latter, during the Reform movement, was closely associated with Mr. Cozens Hardy (father of the present distinguished Judge). This explains the reason why so many original Wesley letters appeared in the "Wesleyan Times." Not unnaturally the whole collection, or the bulk of it, passed into the hands of Mr. Cozens Hardy's brother-in-law, the late Mr. Jeremiah J. Colman, of Norwich. It is quite likely that portions strayed into the hands of James Everett, who knew how to appreciate such treasures. It was through him that Mr. Tyerman became possessed of much original material. Some have complained that Henry Moore did not hand over the whole collection to the Conference Office. Had he done so the extreme probability is that it would not have survived, at all

events as a fairly complete collection, to our time. It would have been scattered or destroyed or sold to America. We may be thankful that it is in safe keeping, and, thanks to the courtesy of its present custodian, is now being used for historical purposes. It should, however, always be remembered that the executors had large discretion under Wesley's will as to the disposal of the MSS.

A second bonfire was made of Sammy Bardsley collection. Sammy was not very methodical, but all his life he preserved letters and papers. At his death they were hastily put into six large corn sacks and sent to City Road. The preachers in charge ordered them to be put into a lumber closet, where they remained for years, no one dreaming that a treasure lay there awaiting the day when some man of sense and discretion should appear on the scene. At length there came a Methodist preacher, whose maid-servant had a certain gift of appreciation. But, alas! the only use she discovered for Sammy's priceless collection was the lighting of fires! Think of the documents that have gone up the chimneys of Wesley's house in smoke and flame!

The Rev. Jeremiah Jordan, another early preacher, left when he died an enormous quantity of letters and papers. Mr. Waller, of Luton, told Mr. Thursfield Smith years ago that for three weeks after their father's death, Jordan's daughters occupied their spare time in burning their father's collection, in which there were many Wesley letters and other precious items.

The Rev. Richard Reece, who was twice President of the Conference, had a brother John, to whom he was greatly attached. John was a noted local preacher in the Whitchurch Circuit, Salop. Richard Reece was in the habit of writing long letters to John concerning Methodist life and work. In particular, after every Conference he wrote an account of all that was said and done during the Conference, making his own comments thereon, which we may rest assured were by no means dull reading, for Richard Reece, if we may trust all the accounts that have come down on waves of family tradition, was one of the strongest and most remarkable men in his time. About fifteen years ago, when Mr. Thursfield Smith, to beguile a time of deep sorrow and bereavement, began to collect old books and tracts and letters and portraits relating to Wesley and

the early Methodist times, one of the daughters of John Reece was a class-leader in the town. Mr. Thursfield Smith asked her about these documents and letters relating to her uncle Richard. She replied that when her mother died three or four years previously, she emptied a number of drawers that were filled with the old papers treasured by her mother, and burned them all. Mr. Thursfield Smith implored her to search for a few surviving letters and papers. She said: "No," she had burned every scrap.

But there are also

"The joys of a collector."

In 1895, after three years' correspondence with Dr. Bennet, of Buxton, Mr. Thursfield Smith spent his first long evening with him and with the precious papers concerning Wesley, the Bennets, and many others of the most illustrious of the early Methodists, then in his and his sister's possession. It was Dr. Bennet's intention at that time to burn the collection, on the ground that it related to private family affairs. His visitor pointed out the untold interest and value of the papers, that they referred to the great work God had done by the Wesleys and Whitefield, and that John and Grace Bennet were closely associated with one of the most interesting periods of that work. On the occasion of a later visit, Dr. Bennet said that he had been led to look at all these matters in a different life as the result of his visitor's conversation. It is a matter of great satisfaction to Mr. Thursfield Smith, and to all Methodism, to know that these valuable documents are still in the safe keeping of the present representative of a family to whom Methodism owes a far greater debt of gratitude than it at present understands.

Recently Mr. Thursfield Smith saw an amusing account of John Wesley's journeys between Epworth and Oxford. The roads during some months of the year were almost impassable. No conveyance of any sort was possible. Most of the journey had to be taken on foot, with the relief of an occasional lift on a carrier's wagon. When the family purse so permitted, a horse was sent from Epworth to Lincoln to meet the traveller. In one of the private diaries Wesley referring to one of these journeys, notes the fact that "he had walked (in journeys) 1,050 miles." On another page he indicates in a

word or two what he would have called a "Remarkable Account" of how his horse fell into a ditch, he being unhurt and the horse being rescued the day after.

Of his own collection, our friend Mr. Thursfield Smith says next to nothing. In reality, it is one of the most valuable in the country. Its owner has spared no expense in his task of accumulation. Better still, he has exercised wonderful judgment in selection and arrangement. And he loves his treasures and understands them. His Hymn and Tune Books are as nearly complete as is now possible. With the utmost kindness he has offered any assistance in his power to the Committees entrusted with the task of preparing those revisions which are now so eagerly anticipated. Only the other day he supplied expert information of the greatest value. As a tribute of love —the tribute of an old Methodist—he has lent us a choice selection of curiosities from his collection.

The first is an original letter, now much stained, written by Wesley to his mother from Hernhuth. The endorsement is in the handwriting of Charles Wesley. It was written within less than two months of his "evangelical conversion." The letter, which Mr. Thursfield Smith says is "priceless," contains Charles Wesley's endorsement:

"DEAR MOTHER,—Soon after I had finished my last to you, we left Colen, in the passage boat, and travelled slowly four days upon the Rhine, through a double range of rocks and mountains, diversified with more variety than painter could imagine. Some were smooth, as if polished by art; some rough, abrupt, and ragged, as if torn by a fresh earthquake. Some again were quite bare; others clothed with grass, other with trees, corn, or vines. On Sunday in the evening we came to Mentz, and on Monday before noon to Frankfurt, where the father of Peter Bohler (lately with me at London and Oxon) received us with all kindness. About one o'clock on Tuesday we came safe to Marienbourn, a small village seven hours from Frankfurt, where Count Zinzendorf has hired for three years (till one is built a few miles off on his own land, which is already begun) a large house and tolerably convenient, which lodges the greatest part of the small congregation here.

"The Count received us in a manner I was quite unacquainted with, and therefore know not how to express. I believe his behaviour was not unlike that of his Master (if we may compare human with Divine) when He took the little children in his arms and blessed them. We should have been much amazed at him, but that we saw ourselves encompast with a cloud of those who were all followers of Him, as He is of Christ. Eighty-eight of them praise God with one heart and one mouth at Marienbourn; another little Company at Runnesburg, an hour off; another at Budingen, an hour from thence, and yet another at Frankfurt. I now understand those words of poor Julian, 'See how these Christians love one another!' Yea, how they love all who have the faintest desire to love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity! O may He sanctify to us their Holy Conversation, that we may be Partakers of the Spirit which is in them: Of their Faith Unfeigned, and Meekness of Wisdom and Love which never faileth. Dear Mother, forget not often to desire this for—Your Dutiful and Affectionate Son,

"JOHN WESLEY.

"Ulph, July 6th (O.S.), 1738."

The following autograph letter was written by Wesley to Mr. Howell Harris, at Trevecka, near Hay, Brecknockshire. It was franked, "Free. James Erskine," and was written from Newcastle-upon-Tyne, March 3, 1746-7.

We commend this letter to the Conference Committee charged with the duty of preventing overlapping and with the interchange of courtesies between the different branches of the Methodist Church. Note what was happening at Plymouth, and how Wesley dealt with a delicate situation:

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I was glad to receive a letter from you, though sorry for some of the contents of it. I believed Brother Cownly would labour for peace, and simply preach the Gospel. I wrote pressingly to Brother Richards (who, I suppose, was at Plymouth since, in his return from Cornwall) to tread in the same steps. By degrees, I trust, these unkind affections may subside, and brotherly love revive and increase.

"My brother said (this I know) 'he had no more design to have

a Society at Plymouth than a palace.' And he had not, neither then, nor when he desired John Trembath to call there. Nor, indeed, does he now concern himself therewith. The burthen lies upon me. And I am in a strait between two. I am much solicited to suffer those who press for it to be under my care. But what to do I know not. May God make plain my way before my face!"

We have in our possession an inventory of the few personal belongings which Wesley took with him to Georgia, also quite a number of accounts belonging to his student days. But by far the most interesting document of this nature is one sent to us by Mr. Thursfield Smith. It is a copy, taken by himself, of an account in Wesley's own handwriting, firmly secured in a volume dated 1733, that once belonged to Thomas Marriott, and is now in the possession of a member of the Wesley family. The following is a copy:

Exp. May 1732.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Law's Serious Call ... | 5/ |
| | Bonnell's Life ... ... | 2/6 |
| | In journey to and fm Epw ... ... ... | 1.0.6 |
| June 3 | Horse hire to do. ... | 1.3.6 |
| July 6 | Marg' Dr. Renty's Life ... ... ... ... | 3.0 |
| 24 | Thos. à Kempis ... | 1.6 |
| | In my journey to Glouc. | |
| | Mr. Rivingtons and horse ... ... ... | 1.0.2 |
| Aug. | Brevint and Heylin's tract ... ... ... ... | 4.0 |
| | Journey to London C | 9.0 |
| | In do. down to Oxford ... ... ... ... | 1.3.6 |
| Sept. | Exp. of journey to Epw ... ... ... ... | 7.0 |
| | do. to Oxford ... | 7.6 |
| Oct. | Spinkes Devotions ... | 3.0 |
| Dec. | Vind. Law ... ... ... | 2.0 |

Exp. Jany. 1733.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 8to | Paid Mr. Rivington | |
| Jan. 1 | For Preaching clear ... ... ... | 2.15.0 |
| | Jour. to Epworth ... | 10.0 |
| Feby. | Jour. to Oxford exp | 5.0 |
| | Horse Hire to Ep... | 1.7.0 |
| Mar. 26 | Preaching clear ... | 2.15.0 |
| Apr. | Ken's Catechism 20/ ... ... ... ... | 5.0 |
| — | Jour. to and from London ... ... ... | 11.0 |
| May | Rec. fm Honest Turnful ... ... ... | 1.2.0 |
| | Journey to Epw ... | 1.0.0 |
| | Lincoln and back ... | 5.0 |
| June | Given A. E. Nelson's Devotions ... ... | 1.0 |
| July | P. and Oratoris | |
| Sep. | spent in journey to Epw ... ... ... | 1.1.0 |
| | mending my whip ... | 2.0 |

# Wesley's Interviews with Famous People.

HAD Wesley been eager for the society of the eminent, his birth, breeding, parts, and position would have ensured him large success. How far he was otherwise appears from his own statement: "We need great grace to converse with great people: from which, therefore (unless in some rare instances), I am glad to be excused." But these "rare instances" reached a goodly number in his long public life, and included interviews with divines mitred, mystical, nonjuring, and nonconforming; with patriots, philanthropists, philosophers, poets, painters, peers, physicians, pretended prophets, prisoners, scholars, statesmen, soldiers, and divers eccentricities.

After dining at Teddington on July 3, 1753, Wesley was invited to spend an hour at the rectory; and as the good parson was a trustee of the colony of Georgia, the invitation could not be declined. It will be remembered that soon after returning from America Charles Wesley waited upon Dr. Hales, and came away with a strong impression of the old philosopher's goodness. The doctor's signature was attached to the last testament of Pope, who greatly valued the friendship of his learned neighbour, though sometimes shocked with his dissections. Few things more delighted Wesley than a good work on a scientific subject, and it is therefore easy to imagine the keen interest with which he followed the "several experiments" showed by the rector in that interview. Before the Royal Society the doctor, who was one of its Fellows, exhibited in 1719 a series of experiments on the effect of the sun's warmth in raising the sap in trees, which were afterwards embodied in his chief work, entitled *Vegetable Statistics*. Some years

later he published the results of other experiments on the effect of sea water, the preservation of meat, the ventilation of buildings, the movements of the stars, etc. When the old man closed his instructive exhibition his visitor made the reflection, "How well do philosophy and religion agree in a man of sound understanding!" In Dr. Hales they existed in eminent degree and perfect reconcilement. He was at once the holder of a benefice and physician to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, an Oxford D.D., Fellow of the Royal Society, and a member of the French Academy; he was devoted to scientific pursuits, especially those likely to be of real service, and yet so zealous as the rector of Teddington that no offer of preferment could allure him from it. About eight years after Wesley's interview the old philosopher was buried under the tower of the church, and a medallion commemorating his genius and goodness was placed in the south transept of Westminster Abbey.

In his Journals Wesley records a great disappointment on October 13, 1769: "I very narrowly missed meeting the great Pascal Paoli. He landed in the dock [Portsmouth] but a very few minutes after I left the water side." Probably most readers understand this to mean that on that day the patriotic Corsican first landed on our shores; but this is a mistake. Dr. Johnson's interview with Paoli in London was an event three days old, and a contemporary print gives the following notices: "September 23. The same day arrived at Mr. Hutchinson's, in Old Bond Street, General Pascal Paoli; and yesterday he waited upon the Duke of Grafton." On September 26 it relates how the exile paid visits to the nobility, and on the 28th follows an account of his appearance at court, where he was graciously received by the king. Wesley's disappointment at Portsmouth may be gauged by the keen interest with which he had read Boswell's book on Corsica. In his remarks on that work he compares Paoli to Epaminondas and Hannibal. On February 19, 1784, came the long-delayed opportunity of meeting the distinguished soldier, and Wesley thus records his impressions: "I spent an agreeable hour with the modern Hannibal, Pascal Paoli; probably the most accomplished General that is now in the world. He is of a middle size, thin, well-shaped, genteel, and has something extremely striking in his countenance. How much happier is he now, with his moderate pension, than he was in the midst of his victories!" The accomplishments of the general were sufficient of

themselves to win him the *entrée* of the highest literary circles, and the readers of this article will remember the engraving which represents him as seated with his host, Johnson, Burke, Goldsmith, Wharton, and Garrick, at the dinner-table of Sir Joshua Reynolds. Paoli's father was a man of culture as well as of military genius; and when the two passed into exile, the son gained no little renown as a scholar at the Jesuits' College in Naples. Johnson was quite as much impressed by the bearing of the patriot as Wesley was, and said that he had the loftiest port of any man he had ever seen, and many of the nobility to whose mansions he was welcomed shared this high opinion. The Duke of Grafton secured for Paoli the pension which Wesley calls moderate. The final reflection of Wesley scarcely commends itself to our belief. If happier as an exile and the pensioner of a foreign power than when he kept at bay the Genoese for twelve long years, than when he ruled almost as a king in his castle of Morosaglia, than when in the fierce delight of battle he conquered the French in two great engagements and compelled them to admire his skill, then this man must not be compared to Hannibal.

In less than nine months the Methodist leader and the exile met once more, and the account of the interview shows that the favourable impression first made was deepened. "He is a *tall*, well-made, graceful man, about sixty years; but he does not look to be above forty. He appears to have a real regard for the public good, and much of the fear of God. He has a strong understanding, and seemed to be acquainted with every branch of polite literature. On my saying he had met with much the same treatment with that of an ancient lover of his country, Hannibal, he immediately answered, 'But I have never yet met with a King of Bithynia.'" The allusion here is to the conduct of Prusias, who, after twice receiving Hannibal as an exile, would through fear have surrendered him to the Romans had not the great general escaped this fate by taking poison. It belongs not to our purpose to sketch the future career of the Corsican—how he returned to his native land the year before Wesley's death, how he met Napoleon at Orezza, how he was compelled again to seek our shores, how he died here in his eighty-second year, how his monument may still be seen in the southern aisle of the nave of our great Abbey, and how his bones were conveyed to Corsica

after lying many long years in the old Roman Catholic cemetery at St. Pancras.

The noble deeds and holy daring of John Howard are too well known to require mention here; but the interview between him and Wesley in Dublin on June 28, 1787—the meeting of two Mr. Greathearts—is too important to be omitted. Wesley followed his own father's example in ministering to the wretched in Oxford Castle; through his long career he had been a diligent prison-visitor, and now he meets the philanthropist who had entered the cells of every chief jail in England and on the Continent, who had received the thanks of the House of Commons, and deserved the gratitude of the unfortunate in every land—the man who, blessed with all that wealth could give, yet hesitated not

> "To quit the bliss that rural scenes bestow,
> To seek a nobler amidst scenes of woe,
> To traverse seas, range kingdoms, and bring home,
> Not the proud monuments of Greece or Rome,
> But knowledge such as only dungeons teach,
> And only sympathy like his could reach."

"I had the pleasure," says Wesley, "of a conversation with Mr. Howard, I think one of the greatest men in Europe. Nothing but the mighty power of God can enable him to go through his difficult and dangerous employments." The mention of these employments would have afforded a sufficient prompting to the genius of Lyttelton for another of his "Dialogues," and to Landor for an addition to his "Imaginary Conversations." But, happily, we are not left to conjecture, inasmuch as the two philanthropists have recorded their impressions of each other. "Mr Howard is really an extraordinary man. God has raised him up to be a blessing to many nations. I do not doubt but there has been something more than natural in his preservation, and should not wonder if the providence of God should hereafter be still more conspicuous in his favour." That Howard, on his part, was equally delighted to meet the preacher whose words had impressed him in his youth appears from his account of the meeting in Dublin: "I was encouraged by him to go on vigorously with my own designs. I saw in him how much a single man might achieve by zeal and perseverance; and I thought, why

may not I do as much in my way as Mr. Wesley has done in his, if I am only as assiduous and persevering; and I determined I would pursue my work with more alacrity than ever." On the eve of his last expedition Howard sought another interview with Wesley; but the evangelist was on his way to Ireland. Howard conversed for an hour with those in residence at City Road, and delighted them with an account of Wesley's preaching at his seat in Bedfordshire. After leaving for his friend's perusal a copy of his latest work, he said with much solemnity: "I have but one thing to do, and I strive to do it with my might. The Lord has taken away whatsoever might be an incumbrance. All places are alike to me, for I find misery in all. . . . Present my respects and love to Mr. Wesley. Tell him I hoped to have seen him once more. Perhaps we may meet again in this world; but, if not, we shall meet, I trust, in a better." A few weeks after this tender farewell the great philanthropist lay dead of a fever at Cherson. The British Senate has seldom listened to such an eloquent passage as that in which Burke paid his tribute to the heroic self-denial of John Howard.

Few entries in Wesley's Journals awaken more surprise than that made in Dublin on April 12, 1750: "I breakfasted with one of the Society, and found she had a lodger I little thought of. It was the famous Mrs. Pilkington, who soon made an excuse for following me upstairs. I talked with her seriously about an hour: we then sung 'Happy Magdalene' [!]. She appeared to be exceedingly struck; how long the impression may last, God knows." Oh, for a painter's skill to picture that scene in the upper room—the singing of his brother's lines by the earnest evangelist and the discarded favourite of Irish society! The Pharisee arches his eyebrows, and says, "This man, if he were a prophet, would have known what manner of woman this was." Certainly he knew it; but indignation for her sins was cooled in tears of pity for her misfortunes. Born in this same city of Dublin, the daughter of the famous Dutch physician, Van Lowen, she soon, by precocious cleverness, attracted the attention of the notables of the capital, among them being the witty Dean of St. Patrick's, who received her with the prophetic words, "What, that poor little child married! God help her; she is early inured to trouble." Deserted by her talented but unprincipled husband, she

sought a livelihood in London by selling pamphlets, and writing her "memoirs" and a play; but so far failed to obtain anything beyond empty patronage that, like Corinna, she was placed in the Marshalsea for debt; and now she is again in her native city, pitifully poor, forsaken by those who once courted her society, with few earthly comforts beyond the bottle to which she became the helpless slave. Mrs. Delany speaks of the harmonious singing at the Pilkingtons'; but poor Letitia must have had musical abilities beyond the common to have joined Wesley at first sight or hearing in Lampe's strains. How long the good impressions lasted we know not; but four months after the memorable interview in the upper room she passed to the great account in her thirty-ninth year.

When Boswell met Wesley in Edinburgh, he produced a letter from Dr. Johnson, dated May 3, 1779, which ran thus: "Mr. Boswell, a gentleman who has been long known to me, is desirous of being known to you, and has asked this recommendation, which I give him with great willingness, because I think it very much to be wished that worthy and religious men should be acquainted with each other." They talked of ghosts, by Boswell's wish; but he says nothing more about the interview than that he was politely received, and that the Methodist leader's belief in the supernatural required less evidence than his own. Wesley gives no "minutes" of the conversation.

The well known interview between Wesley and Johnson was at the earnest desire of the latter brought about by Mrs. Hall, of whom he thought so highly as to offer her a home with him in Bolt Court. Dinner was arranged for an early hour to meet the convenience of the busy guest, but unfortunately it made its appearance much after the fixed time. When, therefore, Wesley rose to go as soon as the meal was concluded, his host could not conceal his chagrin; but Mrs. Hall stepped into the breach, and said, "Why, Doctor, my brother has been with you two hours." "Two hours, madam," replied Johnson. "I could talk all day and all night too with your brother." This was no exaggeration, seeing that he called Wesley Plato. The account of the meeting as recorded in the Journals is simple and pathetic: "Dec. 18, 1783, I spent two hours with that great man, Dr. Johnson, who is sinking into the grave by a gentle decay." A stroke of paralysis

half a year before had been followed by sundry ailments, which brought the monarch of literature to the condition in which his visitor found him, and the "gentle decay" completed its course the year after the above date.

It fell to the lot of Wesley to be twice invited to the cells of two illustrious prisoners—one being his old opponent. the popular Dr. Dodd, condemned to death for forgery; and the other that Lord of Misrule, Lord George Gordon, charged with sedition and treason. The march to Westminster of the hundred thousand Protestants, moving six abreast and wearing blue cockades, preceded by a man bearing on his head the monster petition against the late concessions to Popery, the wild harangues of their leader, the breaking up of the leaguers into predatory bands, the walk of Johnson along Fleet Street to Old Bailey to witness the sack of London, the arrest of his madcap lordship, are they not all written in the chronicles of the nation? The part that Wesley had taken in defending the Protestant Association—of which Gordon was the head—secured him this urgent invitation to the historic prison. The interview is thus described: "I spent an hour with him, at his appartment in the Tower. Our conversation turned upon Popery and religion. He seemed to be well acquainted with the Bible, and had abundance of books, enough to furnish a study. I was agreeably surprised to find he did not complain of any person or thing, and cannot but hope his confinement will take a right turn, and prove a lasting blessing to him."

Wesley was indignant that Gordon should be indicted by the grand jury for "high treason and beginning war, insurrection, and rebellion against the king, etc."; but the trial, which lasted from half-past eight in the morning of one day till five in the morning of the next day, ended in the verdict "Not Guilty," and so justified Wesley's generous anger. No symptoms of the prisoner's insanity seem to have caught the attention of his visitor; but the verdict was largely due to the belief that Gordon was scarcely responsible for his actions: and this was soon justified by his claim to inspiration, his wild words against the king, and by his turning Jew! He was committed to Newgate for insulting certain foreign potentates, and died there in 1793.

Tyerman tells us that when a deputation of Methodist operatives at

Tamworth asked their master, Sir Robert Peel, to aid them in building a chapel, he told them how when residing in Lancashire he once asked Wesley, during one of his conferences, to take breakfast with him. The invitation was accepted on condition that he might bring some of his children with him; and this being readily granted, the president came attended by thirty-six of his itinerant preachers! Wesley does not mention his own generosity; but relates the interview in few words: "July 27, 1787. I was invited to breakfast at Bury [Chamber Hall] by Mr. Peel, a calico-printer; who, a few years ago, began with £500, and is now supposed to have gained £50,000. Oh what a miracle if he lose not his soul!" Though not the founder of the business, which was begun by his father and partners, Wesley's host brought to it in his twenty-third year a mechanical genius and other abilities which soon greatly extended it. There is no need to tell how the calico-printer became a baronet in 1800, and how, born at the old house near Blackburn, he so prospered as to become the owner of the palace of Draycot Park. If Wesley ever learned that Peel imported pauper children from London workhouses and gave them the chance of gaining a good livelihood in the mills at Bury, that this successful manufacturer fell on his knees and vowed to give his new-born child, the future premier, to his country, that he raised a regiment of horse in the time of national peril, and that he attended the Methodist chapels in sundry places, it might have lessened his fear as to the effect of wealth on the rich man's salvation.

On February 12, 1772, Wesley read the epoch-making book of Benezet, the "honest Quaker" schoolmaster of Philadelphia,—the work which turned the attention of Englishmen to the horrors of the slave trade, and which so moved the tender soul of the Methodist leader that he became one of the foremost opponents of "that execrable sum of all villainies." About two years afterwards he issued his *Thoughts upon Slavery*, and in 1787 wrote two letters to the society formed for the suppression of the infamous trade. It may be, therefore, imagined with what joy he welcomed the visit of the ardent young champion of the abolition movement on February 24, 1789. Charles Wesley had been introduced to Wilberforce by Hannah More; but this seems to have been the first meeting of the two opponents of slavery. "Mr. W. called upon me, and we had an agreeable and useful conversation. What a

blessing it is to Mr. P. to have such a friend as this!" The annals of the country give proof of the value of Wilberforce's help to Pitt in the House of Commons; but instead of quoting such proof of their friendship, we give one sentence from the Life of the great philanthropist by his son. This "strong affection survived all the jars of public life, and the strain of a widening diversity of religious views." Even in death they were not divided; for when the representatives of both Houses of Parliament bore the remains of Wilberforce along the aisles of the great Abbey, they placed them close to the resting-place of his lifelong friend. The last letter Wesley ever penned was addressed to the champion abolitionist, who had recently brought his Bill before the Senate; and this letter was found in Wilberforce's desk docketed "Wesley's last words." Its concluding sentence is all that we may quote: "Go on, in the name of God, and in the power of His might, till even American slavery, the vilest that ever saw the sun, shall vanish away before it." To the first Conference after Wesley's death Wilberforce addressed a request for the co-operation of the Methodists in promoting petitions against the slave trade, and presented the ministers assembled with one hundred and two copies of the "Evidence that appeared before a Select Committee," etc. Nobly did the Methodists respond; for the official returns show that while the other twenty-one Nonconforming bodies—including Roman Catholics—secured 122,978 signatures, the Wesleyan Methodists—excluding the Primitives and New Connexion sections—forwarded 1,953 petitions containing 229,426 names!

The romantic meeting with the French general in Ireland, the amusing conversation with the old master at the Charterhouse, the exchange of courtesies with the polished Bishop Lowth, and the discussion of American affairs with Lord North had been set down for notice; but want of space forbids addition to the list already given of Wesley's interviews with famous people.

RICHARD BUTTERWORTH.

# Some of Wesley's Great Sayings.

A MAN'S life has seldom been more completely mirrored in his sayings than is the case with John Wesley. As we turn the pages of his Journals, or read his letters, or study his sermons, the man stands revealed in all his devotion to duty and consecration to the service of God and of his fellows. Wesley's life might be written in his own words, and it would be the best life of him that has ever been written. The purpose of this little paper is not so ambitious. It will serve its purpose if it furnishes a succession of glimpses into that master mind, that wholly consecrated life on which Divine Providence has set its seal of approval so gloriously during the last two centuries.

Wesley's first saying is characteristic. It may be specially commended to the children of Methodism. In it there looks out across the years

"A being breathing thoughtful breath."

It almost appears as though Wesley, turning back to his boyhood, saw himself already "A man of Reason," thoughtful with a boy's precocious thoughtfulness, and obedient to law and order, as embodied in the little world of home. Wesley told Adam Clarke that when he was a child and was asked to have fruit or anything else between meals, he would quietly reply:

"I thank you, I will think of it."

That is the first recorded saying of John Wesley. It needs no great discernment to see there the inner portrait of the Founder of Methodism. His mother made a wise rule that her children should take nothing between meals, and her boy was too well trained to disobey orders. But he was a gentleman already. He had learnt not only

obedience, but courtesy, and the little phrase gives promise of that unfailing tact which fitted him to guide his new Society through the storms of its early history and leave it on the high road to world-wide influence and blessing.

The child in Wesley's case was indeed the father of the man. When he was Fellow of Lincoln Wesley began to reveal his moral fibre. In a letter to his mother, who always proved herself his best counsellor, he tells her about his little economies, and those new purposes which were to lift him to a position of usefulness far beyond his dreams.

"Leisure and I have taken leave of one another. I propose to be busy as long as I live, if my health is so long indulged me."

Those words reveal the secret of Wesley's power. To the last days of his life he illustrated them. You can see him sitting in the inn at Holyhead waiting for the packet boat in 1748, and writing "A Word to a Methodist"; you catch a glimpse of him in his travelling carriage, with his little library about him, redeeming every moment for the people whom he had to educate and prepare for the spheres of usefulness which were opening before them on every hand. Wherever you see Wesley up to the last moments of his life, he is busy on his Lord's service. He set his preachers a high standard. The first word of the "Twelve Rules of a Helper" is a call to lifelong labour.

"Be diligent. Never be unemployed. Never be triflingly employed. Never while away time, nor spend more time at any place than is strictly necessary."

Poor Dr. Johnson chafed under Wesley's brief visits, but he bore witness to his fidelity to the maxim of his youth. "John Wesley's conversation is good, but he is never at leisure. He is always obliged to go at a certain hour. This is very disagreeable to a man who loves to fold his legs and have his talk out, as I do." There would have been no Methodist Revival if Wesley had folded his legs and had his talk out. He had a genius for industry, and it is a rarer gift than some people suppose. Wesley found time for everything, and he did everything well. He was never in a hurry, but he was never idle, and that, under God, made Methodism what it is to-day.

There is an enormous widening of Wesley's horizon in the next of his great sayings. It dates from the time of the first field preaching. It is Wesley's Apologia to one who asked how it was that he gathered

Christians who were not under his charge "to sing psalms, and pray, and hear the Scriptures expounded." The friend thought it hard "to justify doing this in other men's parishes, upon Catholic principles." Wesley's answer is as famous as Luther's "Here I stand: I can no other; so help me God," and more significant.

"Suffer me now to tell you my principles in this matter. I look upon all the world as my parish; thus far, I mean, that, in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty, to declare unto all that are willing to hear, the glad tidings of salvation. This is the work which I know God has called me to; and sure I am that His blessing attends it. Great encouragement have I, therefore, to be faithful in fulfilling the work He hath given me to do. His servant I am, and, as such, am employed according to the plain direction of His word, 'As I have opportunity, doing good unto all men.' And His providence clearly concurs with His word; which has disengaged me from all things else, that I might singly attend on this very thing, and 'go about doing good.'"

That is the golden saying of Wesley. It made him a centre of life and blessing wherever he went. It is because his mantle has, in some measure, fallen on his people's shoulders that Methodism is a world-wide Church. In obedience to that maxim is wrapped up the salvation of the world.

Wesley seems to have had this in view in another saying. He had made a collection in Newcastle-on-Tyne for the Indian Schools in America (August, 1767). "A large sum of money is now collected; but will money convert heathens? Find preachers of David Brainerd's spirit, and nothing can stand before them; but without this, what will gold and silver do? No more than lead or iron. They have indeed sent thousands to hell; but never yet brought a soul to heaven."

Wesley had a great faith in men. But they must be men of the right sort, who made God's work their daily business. "Nothing," he said, "will stand in the Methodist plan unless the preacher has his heart and his hand in it. Every preacher, therefore, should consider it is not his business to mind this or that thing only, but everything." Nothing pleases the Methodist people better than to see the preacher walking by Wesley's rule, encouraging and guiding all the work of the Church by his timely presence and his helping hand.

A fine set of sayings may be found in the preface to Wesley's sermons. "I design plain truth for plain people. I labour to avoid all words which are not easy to be understood, all which are not used in common life." He had learnt that lesson early, when a country congregation listened with open mouths to his polished sermon. Wesley read the sermon to Betty, the servant, and asked her to stop him whenever there was a word she did not understand. The "Stop, sir," came so often that he was impatient, but he curbed his temper and learned how to preach to rustics. The style of St. John's First Epistle was his ideal, and he urged all young preachers to model their own styles upon it. "Here are sublimity and simplicity together, the strongest sense and the plainest language! How can anyone that would 'speak as the oracles of God,' use harder words than are found here?"

It is in the same preface that the great passage is found—

"I have thought, I am a creature of a day, passing through life as an arrow through the air. I am a spirit come from God, and returning to God: just hovering over the great gulf; till, a few moments hence, I am no more seen; I drop into an unchangeable eternity! I want to know one thing; the way to heaven; how to land safe on that happy shore. God himself has condescended to teach the way: for this very end He came from heaven. He hath written it down in a book. O give me that book! At any price give me the book of God! I hate it: Here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be *homo unius libri*" (a man of one book).

For those who thought Wesley mistaken the same preface has some golden sayings. "I trust whereinsoever I have mistaken, my mind is open to conviction. I sincerely desire to be better informed. I say to God and man, 'What I know not, teach Thou me.'"

What gracious irony follows!

"But be not displeased if I entreat you not to beat me down in order to quicken my pace: I can go but feebly and slowly at best; then, I should not be able to go at all. May I not request of you, further, not to give me hard names in order to bring me into the right way. Rather, it would make me run so much the farther from you, and so get more and more out of the way. Nay, perhaps, if you are so angry, so shall I be too; and then there will be small hopes of finding the truth."

Wesley stands out among religious leaders as the man of the open

mind. He was God's scholar and the world's scholar to the last day of his life. He calmed the indignant old preacher who was irritated because a young itinerant found fault with one of his seniors. "I will thank the youngest man among you to tell me of any fault you see in me; in doing so, I shall consider him my best friend." When he looked over the writings of William Dell he says, "From his whole manner, one may learn, that he has not been very patient of reproof or contradiction; so that it is no wonder there is generally so much error mixed with the great truths which he delivers."

Wesley was always jealous over his own soul. He saw how much Christians might do to strengthen each other in the fight against temptation. After a devotional hour spent with some pious people in February, 1760, he writes: "Mysterious providence! Why am I cut off from these opportunities, which of all others I most want? Especially considering the benefit I might impart, as well as that which I might receive; seeing they stand as much in need of light as I do of heat."

Four years later a lady asked Mr. Wesley's leave to pray in a little company at Bath. He says "Such a prayer I never heard before. It was perfectly an original; odd and unconnected, made up of disjointed fragments, and yet like a flame of fire. Every sentence went through my heart, and I believe the heart of every one present. For many months I have found nothing like it. It was good for me to be here."

Wesley had no difficulty in getting hold of the working men of England. They flocked to hear him wherever he went—from Newcastle to the Land's End. He won their ear; he won their heart. At Birmingham, on Good Friday, 1785, he says, "In every place we find working men most susceptible to religion. Such a blessing results from that curse 'In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread.'"

It was no wonder that working men appreciated the gentleman and the scholar who had made such sacrifices for their sakes and who brought them not only the peace of God, but the lessons which transformed life for so many of them and lifted them out of poverty into comparative prosperity. Wesley made his preachers the advocates of everything that would promote health and well-being. In one of the "conversations on the work of God" in an early Conference Wesley urges, "Everywhere recommend decency and cleanliness. Cleanliness is next to Godliness." That counsel comes abruptly in the midst of sug-

gestions about Notes of Removal and band tickets. It was not Wesley's, but he gave currency to the saying of "a pious man" (vii. 123), and who will say what fruit it has borne in the world.

A Derbyshire girl once ran to the door as he was passing, and cried, "God bless you, Mr. Wesley." "Young woman," he answered, "your blessing would be of more value if your face and apron were cleaner."

His itinerants' wives were expected to be examples to the flock.

"A preacher's wife should be a pattern of cleanliness in her person, clothes, and habitation. Let nothing slatternly be seen about her; no rags, no dirt, no litter. And she should be a pattern of industry; always at work, either for herself, her husband, or the poor."

It is refreshing to read the letter to the Irish preacher, full of counsels for his flock. The Methodists are to take pattern by the Quakers in matters of cleanliness. And whatever clothes they wear must be free from tatters. "Mend your clothes, or I shall never expect you to mend your lives. Let none ever see a ragged Methodist."

Archbishop Benson (Life, I., 433), when Bishop of Truro, asks a friend, "How came John Wesley to say, 'The poor are the Christians after all'?" The answer is simple. John Wesley spent much of his time among the poor. He rejoiced in their simple faith; he saw that it was comparatively easy for them to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Their simplicity and hearty goodwill gave him constant pleasure. One day he called unexpectedly at a gentleman's house, and announced that he had come to dine.

"Sir," was the answer, "we had no notice of your coming; and we are so badly provided, that I fear you cannot make a dinner out of such as we have."

Wesley proposed to take him to a place where they could both have dinner. He led the gentleman to the house of a widow to whom he made a weekly allowance.

"Sister," he said, "I am come to dine with you; and I have brought a friend with me."

The old woman replied:

"Sir, I am very glad to see you, and you shall be very welcome; I have got some good bread, and some good cheese, and I'll fetch you some porter."

Wesley turned to his companion with a smile, and said:

"Sir, I told you I could bring you to a place where we could both make a dinner."

In a letter to a member of his society (xii. 301) he pays tribute to the humble folk he had learned to love.

"I have found some of the uneducated poor who have exquisite taste and sentiment; and many, very many, of the rich who have scarcely any at all. And they have (many of them) faith and love of God in a larger measure than any persons I know. Creep in among these, in spite of the dirt, and a hundred disgusting circumstances; and thus put off the gentlewoman."

Nothing troubled Wesley more than the fact that his people were increasing in goods through the diligence and frugality which true religion had taught them, and consequently were beset by new forms of temptation. He saw only one way of escape. If those who gained all they could, and saved all they could, would only give all they could, then the more they gained the more they would grow in grace, and the more treasure they would lay up in heaven.

Every word that Wesley speaks to workers has the emphasis of his own life laid upon it. He had an unwavering faith in patient continuance in well doing. On August 6, 1775, he writes to Miss Perronet, "I doubt not but Brother Wood and his fellow-labourer will be still zealous and active for God; and, if so, His work will surely increase at Sevenoaks and the Wells (Tunbridge Wells), as well as other places." In February, 1762, he preached in Sir Thomas I'Anson's large parlour at New Bounds, near Tonbridge.

"The plain people were all attention. If the seed be watered, surely there will be some fruit." Wesley had learnt a great lesson when he preached on his father's tomb in Epworth Churchyard: "Oh, let none think his labour of love is lost because the fruit does not immediately appear. Near forty years did my father labour here; but he saw little fruit of his labour. I took some pains among this people, too; and my strength, also, seemed spent in vain. But now the fruit appeared. There were scarce any in the town on whom either my father or I had taken any pains formerly, but the seed sown so long since now sprang up, bringing forth repentance and remission of sins."

Wesley was content to do what his conscience approved, no matter what the future might have in store. In October, 1771, some one gave

him "a melancholy account of his dismission from the Tabernacle. Surely," he says, "affairs will not stand thus at the Foundery when my head is laid! If I thought they would, I would do just as I do now—all the good I can while I live."

He was faithful to every duty to the last. His constant prayer was, "Lord, let me not live to be useless!" He sought to encourage all the truth's friends and champions to take that path.

His last letter, written from Balham to William Wilberforce, strikes this note, "Oh, 'be not weary in well-doing.' Go on, in the name of God, and in the power of His might, till even American slavery, the vilest that ever saw the sun, shall vanish away before it."

Wesley had enough faith to keep him from murmuring. He tells Mrs. Jane Barton (xii. 381), "Then beware of anger; of fretfulness, or peevishness, which maketh the grasshopper a burden." Wesley lived by that rule. When his plans were upset he says, "Oh, how good it is to have no choice of our own, but to leave all things to the will of God." One of the finest pages in his letters is that revelation of his own heart which he made to Mr. Blackwell (xii. 183), "I am content with whatever entertainment I meet with, and my companions are always in good humour, 'because they are with me.' This must be the spirit of all who take journeys with me. If a dinner ill dressed, a hard bed, a poor room, a shower of rain, or a dirty road, will put them out of humour, it lays a burden upon me, greater than all the rest put together. By the grace of God, I never fret; I repine at nothing; I am discontented with nothing. And to have persons at my ear, fretting and murmuring at everything, is like tearing the flesh off my bones. I see God sitting upon His throne, and ruling all things well. Although, therefore, I can bear this, also—to hear His government of the world continually found fault with (for in blaming the things which He alone can alter, we, in effect, blame Him); yet it is such a burden to me as I cannot bear without pain; and I bless God when it is removed."

Wesley's view of religion appeals more and more strongly to thoughtful men. In Bury St. Edmunds, on November 2, 1772, he preached to a cold little company on 1 Corinthians xiii. He says, "This love is the very thing they want; but they did not like to be told so. But I could not help that. I must declare just what I find in the Book."

That is certainly one of Wesley's golden sayings—Fidelity to the Book of God. In Scotland twelve years later (May 16, 1784) he preached from the same chapter. "In utter defiance of their common saying, 'He is a good man, though he has bad tempers.' Nay, if he has bad tempers, he is no more a good man than the devil is a good angel." His definition of entire sanctification as "the humble, gentle, patient love of God and our neighbour, ruling our tempers, words, and actions," commends his doctrine to all earnest men. That is the religion that sweetens life in every part of the world. Wesley believed in gentleness. He says to one of his preachers, "Oblige Dr. Cockburn as far as possibly you can. We can bear with little tempers, tho' we do not approve of them. I can say little now, to what T. Tobias writes of. I should think a patient, mild man might quiet two scolding women."

Wesley saw more and more that the fruit of grace was found in all communions. In Sticklepath he was stopped abruptly in the street by a stranger, who asked, "Is not thy name John Wesley?" Immediately two or three more came up, and told him he must stop there. "I did so, and before we had spoken many words, our souls took acquaintance with each other. I found they were called Quakers; but that hurt not me; seeing the love of God was in their hearts." Such views made Wesley tolerant of diversity of opinions. He showed a noble spirit of tolerance when he preached in City Road, on the anniversary of Gunpowder Plot, 1780, and "showed that, supposing the Papists to be heretics, schismatics, wicked men, enemies to us, and to our Church and nation; yet we ought not to persecute, to kill, hurt, or grieve them, but barely to prevent their doing hurt." He always felt that, "The work of God does not, cannot need the work of the devil to forward it. And a calm, even spirit goes through rough work far better than a furious one" (iii. 254).

Wesley's death-bed sayings crown his life with a sacred approval. Long before he had laid stress on the fact that Methodism stood the test of death-beds. "Our people die well." Wesley's illustration of that word in his own closing hours has been an inspiration to his people for more than a century. He had given up all to God, but he sought only for mercy. "There is no need for more; when at Bristol, my words were,

"'I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me.'"

In a low, but very distinct manner he was heard to say: "There is no way into the holiest but by the blood of Jesus." Death set its seal on his teaching. He felt himself "on the right foundation."

The source of all true strength was revealed in the greatest word spoken in that hallowed chamber. Wesley's hand refused to hold the pen, but when asked what he would say, he replied, "Nothing, but that God is with us." That comfort was strong in the hour of death. A little later, when he found that the watchers round his bed could not understand what he said, he paused, and, with all his remaining strength, cried out:

"The best of all is, God is with us."

Then, lifting up his dying arm in token of victory, and raising his feeble voice with a holy triumph not to be expressed, he again repeated the heart-reviving words, "The best of all is, God is with us."

That was the secret of Wesley's peace and power in the days of hardship and persecution. It did not fail him at the end. From Wesley's death-bed it has passed on to his people. Whatever prosperity Methodism has won, and it is now the mightiest Protestant Church in the world, is due to that Divine Presence in which is wisdom and strength for every perplexity and for every duty.

What can we better do amid the rejoicings of this Bi-Centenary than echo the last death-bed saying of our Founder, that link between two worlds:

"I'll praise my Maker while I've breath,
And when my voice is lost in death,
Praise shall employ my nobler powers;
My days of praise shall ne'er be passed,
While life, and thought, and being last,
Or immortality endures."

JOHN TELFORD.

# Wesley as an Aphorist.

AMONG the many thousands who revere the name of Wesley there are probably but few who have read the whole of his collected works, and still fewer who have realised what a mine they are of terse and pithy maxims. That they are sound and wise, readers of these volumes are aware and non-readers will take for granted, but any one who will go carefully through them and mark the proverbial, aphoristic sentences will be surprised to find how practical—in the sense of usable or quotable—the wisdom of Wesley is.

A poetical writer delights in long sentences; a logical writer prefers short ones. And Wesley had a way of going straight to the point. "My 'dogmaticalness,'" he says in one of his letters, "is neither more nor less than a custom of coming to the point at once, and telling my mind flat and plain, without any preface or ceremony." We find, therefore, that whether it be journal, sermon, treatise, or letter upon which he is engaged, he never wastes his words. Moreover, he thoroughly understood what constitutes "style" in a writer. "Perspicuity, purity, propriety, strength, and easiness joined together" is his view of the matter. "When any one of these is wanting," he adds, "it is not a good style." It was natural, therefore, to Wesley to express himself as concisely as possible, and to treat every subject he touched with an almost mathematical precision. And the short, crisp sentences in which he summed up his opinions or gave his advice are not only just in themselves, but thoroughly characteristic of the man. There is nothing artificial in Wesley's aphorisms. They reveal the man himself.

Macaulay remarks in one of his essays that the good things of good writers are best in their places, and we run a certain risk of marring them when we divorce them from their context; but an

aphorism is hardly worth the name unless it can be detached and become a kind of current coin. We will proceed, then, to cite, and roughly to classify, a few of Wesley's best sayings, letting them for the most part speak for themselves without comment, date, or reference.

Three of Wesley's great mottoes are well known to all. That of his outward life, "I look upon all the world as my parish," and that of his inner experience, "Let me be a man of one Book," and the shout of triumph uttered the day before his death, "The best of all is God is with us," are frequently quoted, and are by this time well established Methodist proverbs. But many other utterances deserve a like recognition.

On the economy of time and the right use of the present hour, Wesley expresses himself very frequently and forcibly. "A Christian abhors sloth as much as drunkenness," is perhaps his strongest statement on this subject, but the following are more pleasing variations of the sentiment:

"It is a great thing to seize and improve the very now."
"Surely the man that may die to-night should live to-day!"
"You cannot live on what God did yesterday."
"The more labour the more blessing;"

and, more briefly still, "Let us live to-day!" Horace's "*carpe diem*" is evidently the original of this expression, but how different the logical content of the dictum of the voluptuary from that of the saint!

"Let us this day use all the power we have," is another form of the same thought, which was expressed times without number through all those active years. It becomes almost pathetic at last. At twenty-eight he writes: "Leisure and I have taken leave of one another," and it was true, for at eighty-six he is still saying, "Let us work now; we shall rest by-and-by."

On the supremacy of love among the graces of the Christian character Wesley has some golden sayings, some too lengthy to be called aphorisms, but of the briefer ones the following are examples:

"An ounce of love is worth a pound of knowledge."
"Faith itself . . . is only the handmaid of love."

"How far is love, even with many wrong opinions, to be preferred before truth itself without love."
"O for heat and light united."

His hatred of bigotry was one of the most striking features of Wesley's character. When the age in which he lived and the men with whom he often had to dispute are duly considered, his liberality of mind appears amazing. These are some of his expressions:

"Think and let think."
"Fervour for opinions is not Christian zeal."
"If we cannot think alike . . . at least we may love alike."
"Can anything but love beget love?"

Wesley's knowledge of human nature and his discernment of types of character form another of his outstanding features. The following aphorisms show his penetration in this respect:

"Men are generally inclined to think well of one that talks well."
"Apathy is as far from meekness as from humanity."
"O what mischief may be done by one that means well!"
"As all men have not faith, so all believers have not wisdom."
"Great whims belong to great men."
"How amiable is courtesy joined to sincerity! Why should they ever be divided?"
"You like to be honoured, but had you not rather be beloved?"
"Be not prejudiced against Christianity by those who know nothing at all of it."

The works of Wesley abound in liberal and kindly maxims, which show him to have possessed a sane and well-balanced mind, without a trace of fanaticism. The following are refreshing examples:

"God can do His work by pleasure as well as by pain."
"Pain is no more salutary than pleasure."
"Aim at the cheerfulness of faith."
"I will not buy a cross, though I can bear it."
"Continually telling people they are dead is the ready way to make them so."

"Weak faith may yet be true faith."

"No man living is without some preventing grace, and every degree of grace is a degree of life."

"I love truth wherever I find it."

"What is as clear to me as the sun at noonday is not so clear to everyone."

"I have often repented of judging too severely, but very seldom of being too merciful."

No estimate of Wesley would be complete which ignored his unquestioning trust in Divine Providence, and this is illustrated in dozens of pregnant sentences. These are a few of them:

"God's time is always the best time."

"Any but a particular Providence is no Providence at all."

"Whatever God calls us to He will fit us for."

"The way to the kingdom lies through honour and dishonour."

"All is good which lies in the way to glory."

Wesley's biographers point out that while he moved about these islands for more than fifty years stirring up excitement wherever he went, he himself was always calm. His pulse never seems to quicken. He was never flurried. His advice and experience on this point are embodied in the following:

"Be exact in everything."

"Give everything the last touch."

"Though I am always in haste, I am never in a hurry."

"Duty is all I consider. Trouble and reproach I value not."

Only a few days before his death he writes to Dr. Adam Clarke, "Do a little at a time that you may do the more."

Among the aphorisms which indicate the devoutness of Wesley's mind and the practical quality of his religious experience are the following:

"Every command in Holy Writ is only a covered promise."

"Ease bought by sin is a dear purchase."

"Whatever religion can be concealed is not Christianity."

"All unholy tempers are unhappy tempers."
"When the Holy Ghost teaches, there is no delay in learning."
"If you would please men, please God."
"Use the world and enjoy God."
"One great office of prayer is to increase our desire of the things we ask for."
"What is the real value of a thing but the price it will bear in eternity?"

The above list might be greatly lengthened, but we will only add a few quotations which illustrate Wesley's strong commonsense:

"There are many truths it is not worth while to know." (1727.)
"Free thinkers, so-called, are seldom close thinkers."
"Take nothing ill that is well meant."
"Always take advice or reproof as a favour."
"If there were no hearers there would be no speakers of evil."
"Be not afraid to know yourself."

We have now cited about sixty of the briefer aphorisms found in Wesley's works, but it should be added that there are many other passages cast in what might be called mathematical form, which are too long to be classed with the above terse and pithy, though not in every case, original sayings. These abound in the sermons. We must be content with three examples. "An unawakened (sinner) sins willingly; one that is awakened sins unwillingly; a child of God sinneth not." "The natural man neither conquers nor fights; the man under the law fights with sin, but cannot conquer; the man under grace fights and conquers." "The righteousness of Christ is necessary to *entitle* us to heaven, personal holiness to *qualify* us for it. Without the former we could have no *claim* to glory; without the latter we could have no *fitness* for it."

As Methodists, we rejoice that a high place among men of letters is accorded to Wesley by the critics of to-day; but while we are gratified that the outsider is reading Wesley, we must not neglect him ourselves. His works are models of good temper and good taste, but, above all, they are healthy and stimulating manuals of devotion.

Wesley's voice, like that of other great leaders, grows fainter as his age recedes into the past, but it will not be altogether silent for many years to come. To us it is still distinct, and we cannot do better than conclude with a few more brief messages from his lips:

"The Gospel is in truth but one great promise from the beginning of it to the end."

"Our business now is to love and obey; knowledge is reserved for eternity."

"They that bring most holiness to heaven will find most happiness there."

"Let love fill your heart, and it is enough."

JOHN T. WADDY

# Wesley as a Popular Preacher.

I WANT to insist upon an historical fact, and to draw inferences from it. My desire is to fix upon a neglected factor in John Wesley's biography, and to point the present-day moral.

How forgotten it frequently is that the human Founder of Methodism was a popular preacher! Such is undoubtedly the case. Yes. He was not only a pulpit-thinker, a theological preacher, an expository preacher, an evangelistic preacher; John Wesley was a popular preacher.

It was Dr. Rigg, in the finest and freshest book on Wesley known to me, "The Living Wesley," who first burned it into my consciousness. Dr. Rigg says in that really fascinating book, "He was the most awakening and spiritually penetrative and powerful preacher of his age."

Such a preacher must have been popular. And such unquestionably he was. As a matter of fact, let it be noted that Wesley's "preached sermons" were "altogether different in character" from his "printed sermons." This is Dr. Rigg's verdict, and who would be likely to controvert it?

Many have surmised that John Wesley was hardly a popular preacher. But they have founded their surmise upon the printed sermons. It is a mistake. The sermons he preached all over the kingdom in his glorious evangelical campaigns were "altogether different in character" from the discourses we possess, and which were specially written for the purpose of doctrinal or theological definition.

What was John Wesley's style of preaching when he faced the people? It was eloquent, vivid, sententious, ardent, and spiritually overwhelming. Such preaching always has been and always will be popular.

But we scarcely need analyse the preaching of Wesley into its constituent elements in order to prove that he was a popular preacher. The witness is writ large in his immortal Journals. For fifty crowded years he was, in the best sense of the word, a popular preacher. He was more popular as he grew older, and most popular in his closing days. John Wesley was a king of the people's pulpit. Methodism's Father was one of history's most popular prophets.

Let it be observed that John Wesley was a popular preacher in the noblest signification of that oft-abused term. He spoke effectively and acceptably in highest degree to all sorts and conditions of people —to rich and poor, to cultured and ignorant, to high-born and mean. That is the worthy pulpit-popularity! Many may be popular with sections, and orders, and cults. Wesley had a full-orbed popularity.

I say his Journals amply endorse the popularity of this wonderful preacher. Take an instance or so, drawn from those thrilling and romantic pages. "Between five and six I called upon all who were present (about three thousand) at Stanley, on a little green, near the town, to accept Christ. . . . I was strengthened to speak as I never did before, and continued speaking near two hours; the darkness of night and a little lightning not lessening the number, but increasing the seriousness of the hearers." Only a supremely popular preacher could have achieved such a distinctive triumph!

Here is another "after its kind." At Cardiff: "At six o'clock in the evening I had almost the whole town to hear me. . . . My heart was so enlarged I knew not how to give over, so we continued three hours." None but a singularly popular preacher could have wrought thus! Take a yet more arresting example of Wesley as a popular pulpiter. "In the midst of a mob I called for a chair; the winds were hushed, and all was calm and still; my heart was filled with love, my eyes with tears, and my mouth with arguments. They were amazed. They were ashamed. They were melted down. They devoured every word." That was a matchless example of popular preaching!

Nor need we multiply illustrations, though they crowd the incomparable Journals. Wesley could not have done what he did had he not been a popular preacher. Even Whitefield did not produce the popular effects on such a scale as Wesley did. It is an historical fact that Methodism was established, in God's good pleasure, by popular

preaching. Wesley's organising genius was amazing. He was the consummate organiser of Protestant ecclesiastics. But he would have had little scope for his organising faculty had he not first gathered the people to Shiloh by his popular preaching. That was not first in Wesley which was of organising, but that which was of popular preaching. Wesley, the popular preacher, precedes Wesley, the skilful organiser.

Let it be recognised that the first factor of Wesley's God-given success was his power as a popular preacher. We rejoice and will rejoice in his masterly organising gift. Thereby his great work has been conserved. We, his sons and daughters, glory in the unique Church organisation we have inherited. It is a world's wonder.

But there is danger of forgetting the debt we owe to John Wesley as a popular preacher. Thank God that "utterance Divine" came with such unprecedented influence from his lips to the thrilled multitudes of this kingdom.

Methodists, of all people, should appreciate popular preaching, else surely they have lost the historic sense. The force God used through Wesley we should greatly prize. I know how often so-called popular preaching has been unworthy. Acid epithets have been applied to it, and often justly. Like other sorts of preaching, it has often come short of its glory. None the less, the children of John Wesley should set great store by popular preaching.

Increasing culture and augmented organisation often militate, in a Church, against popular preaching. But to sneer at it is not to employ an argument against it.

I am bold to assert that it is injurious to a Church to depreciate such preaching. Mr. A. Taylor Innes, in an exquisite sketch of the late Dr. A. B. Davidson, thus alludes to that great scholar's sermons: "They were all written under the influence of that traditional depreciation of popular preaching, in imaginary rivalry with thinking and theology and scholarship, which has blighted the output for the pulpit of the New College of Edinburgh as compared with that of other academic centres in Scotland, and which his own influence helped to continue." I am unable to criticise this distinguished writer's statement as it bears on the College to which he refers. But I wish to call attention to the phrase, "the traditional depreciation of popular preach-

ing." There is always apt to be such "traditional depreciation" in Theological Colleges, and in ecclesiastical conclaves, and in churches, but we must not allow it dominance in Methodism, or it will produce us a disastrous harvest. Wesley's example should be for ever the destruction of such "traditional depreciation" among the people called Methodists.

Dr. Marcus Dods has an essay on Preaching in his volume, "Erasmus and other Essays," which I would were more widely known. Dr. Dods refers there to the "traditional depreciation" as he found it in his College days, and he greatly deplores it. Let me quote a passage of the invaluable essay: "In my College days, the prevalent ambition was to be foremost in study, and a number of thoroughly good students were formed. But, along with this laudable ambition, there existed something verging on contempt of the popular preacher. We respected a man who had a great deal in him; but, if he was able to bring it out, and had not only much that was worth saying, but could say it in a worthy manner, and so that people were compelled to listen, and believe, we regarded him with some measure of suspicion. The consequence is too obvious to be overlooked by the blindest adherent of our Church. We possess an unduly large proportion of small congregations. There is a greater waste of the raw material of good preaching among ourselves than, I suppose, among any other body of Christians."

Such a testimony from such a man may well be laid to heart. "Small congregations" and "waste of the raw material of good preaching," are only samples of many evils that follow in the track of depreciation of popular preaching.

Happily, Methodism has been in considerable degree a system of popular preaching. Herein it has been harmonious with its historical origin, for it is the child of a great popular preacher. The early Methodist preachers were, almost to a man, popular preachers. John Wesley was in himself a collegiate staff, and he drilled a grand band of Gospel preachers, whose pulpit was broad based upon popular appreciation, and crowned with the benediction of God. Methodism's great clerical leaders have been, in the main, like John Wesley, popular preachers. This has done much to keep the Methodist pulpit on the basis on which Wesley placed it. It is a thing to be deplored when a Church is not

led by popular preachers. Inevitably the popularity of such a Church will decline. Churches pay a heavy price for leaders who lack popular instincts. I am not oblivious of the fact that a Church's popularity is not everything, but I remember that the Pentecostal Church was popular: it had "favour with all the people"; and when the Spirit of God possesses a Church it becomes a popular Church. When we have God we have the people. A Church which has the favour of the Lord is likely to be blessed with the favour of man.

A noble ideal of popular preaching, of Wesley-like popular preaching, ought to be hereditary in John Wesley's Church. Let it be kept before our students in the Theological Institutions. Let us hope there will never be within those walls a trace of the depreciation to which Mr. Taylor Innes and Dr. Marcus Dods allude in those ominous paragraphs already referred to. By all means no truce with vulgarity, or mere claptrap, or vapid sensationalism, but let there be a sacred enthusiasm for such preaching as shall arrest the ear and enchain the heart of the multitude!

We need in our day to keep up our belief in popular preaching. Nothing else permanently fills the churches. It is God's great instrument for the salvation of the world. No Church does wisely that slights its popular preachers, or depreciates their function. Were Methodism to do so, it would break away from its historical landmarks, and show itself estranged from the spirit of John Wesley.

Recent census returns of various denominations speak loudly of the need of popular preaching. Wesley's instrument is still in demand. This assuredly is one of the lessons which the Bi-Centenary should enforce. Really there is nothing the Churches need so much to-day as popular preachers, whose popularity represents the spirit and power of John Wesley. If the reconstitution of our ministerial Colleges contribute to that end, we shall rejoice in time to come. This is one of the most vital questions of modern Methodism. All who have influence in our councils should lay this to heart. Our Fernley Lecture trustees, who, strangely, have never yet arranged a lecture on Preaching, would do well to speedily initiate a disquisition on Popular Preaching. That the spirit of popular prophecy may rest upon our Church in increasing degree may well be the burden of the prayers of Methodist people.

All hail scholarly and cultured preaching! All hail any kind of

preaching that will affect the people's mind, and win their hearts for the world's Redeemer.

The greatness of John Wesley impresses the world more and more as the years pass. Surely Paul, Luther, and Wesley are the three mightiest of Christian history! And, if we were asked to name a fourth, many of us would gratefully add the name of Spurgeon. Many phases of Wesley will be dilated upon at this Bi-Centenary period, but I judge it expedient in this article to call attention to an aspect of the wonderful man which too often eludes our contemplation.

That John Wesley was a popular preacher is a fact which most assuredly has an abiding moral.

DINSDALE T. YOUNG.

# Wesley's Work in Ireland.

"IRELAND," says Southey, "is the only country in which the Reformation produced nothing but evil." This arose from the fact that the reformed faith was introduced by an alien race, inculcated in an alien language, and enforced by an alien government. A partial system of persecution was pursued, at once odious for its injustice and contemptible for its inefficiency. Good principles and generous feelings were thereby provoked into an alliance with superstition and sacerdotalism; and the priests, whom the law recognised only for the purpose of punishing if they discharged the duties of their office, established a more absolute dominion over the minds of the people than was possessed by the clergy in any other part of the world.

When Wesley entered upon his hallowed enterprise in this country, eight elevenths of the population, or about one million seven hundred and fourteen thousand, were in Romish darkness; and these poor deluded people were left wholly to their priests, many of whom were addicted to drunkenness, and knew little save how to read prayers, many of which they did not all understand. Thus the Roman Catholics as a class were sunk in the deepest ignorance and social degradation. The Established Church also presented a most melancholy spectacle to the eye of the Christian observer. Being considered by British statesmen rather as a political engine than as a means of instruction in evangelical truth, its dignities and benefices were bestowed as the reward of political rather than of moral and religious worth. The clergy in general were comparatively few in number, badly paid, and ill fitted for their work. "A cold, formal, worldly spirit crept down like a mountain mist from the high places of the Church, and spread itself everywhere." George Whitefield, in his third visit to the country, could say, "Not one clergyman in all Ireland is yet stirred up to come out singularly for God."

In nearly all the parishes one public service on the Lord's day afforded the only means of religious instruction, and at this it too frequently happened not one fourth of the adult Protestant population attended. During one of his early visits Wesley writes with special reference to the provinces: "Oh, what a harvest might be reaped in Ireland, did not the poor Protestants hate Christianity more than either Popery or heathenism!" In the north-eastern counties Presbyterians were numerous; but Arianism on the one hand and Calvinism on the other had very much impaired, if not completely destroyed, the experimental religion enjoyed by their fathers, so that their Church appeared as if smitten by spiritual paralysis. Thus the clergy, whether Episcopalian or Presbyterian, did not attempt any bold aggressive movement on the prevailing ignorance, superstition, and immorality. Societies for discountenancing vice or promoting education, Bible and temperance societies, tract associations and Sunday schools, were unknown.

It is not clear by what providential circumstance Wesley's thoughts were first directed to Ireland. At the Conference of 1746, held in Bristol, the question appears in the Minutes, "What is a sufficient call of Providence to a new place? Suppose Edinburgh or Dublin?" The answer is, "An invitation from someone that is worthy; from a serious man, fearing God, who has a house to receive us; and a probability of doing more good by going thither than by staying longer where we are." From the special reference to the metropolis of Ireland it may be reasonably concluded that the subject of commencing work for God in this country occupied the serious attention of Wesley at this period. And from the nature of the reply, together with the fact that within twelve months the work was begun, it may be assumed that a request was received from a person in the city to send labourers to this sadly neglected portion of the Lord's vineyard.

Wesley landed in Dublin on Sunday morning, August 9, 1747, and soon afterwards, hearing the church bells ringing for service, went thither. In the afternoon he preached in St. Mary's Church "to as gay and senseless a congregation as he ever saw"; but was not afforded the opportunity of doing so again. He was, however, most favourably impressed by the people, and says: "For natural sweetness of temper, for courtesy and hospitality, I have never seen any people like the Irish." And again: "The people in general are of a more teachable spirit than

in most parts of England." But he little knew then the bitter persecution from which the little company of Methodists would suffer, in gross misrepresentation, personal abuse, destruction of property, and miscarriage of justice, which in time were overcome by the fortitude and resolution of the devoted band.

Methodism having been once planted in the country, Wesley took a deep, practical, and protracted interest in its growth and extension. He paid twenty-one visits to Ireland, and thus crossed the Channel forty-two times, and that in wretched sailing vessels, in which on at least two occasions he narrowly escaped shipwreck, while on a third he encountered such a violent tempest for two days and two nights that the packet was driven back into Holyhead Harbour. His visits embraced about five and a-half years of his public life; during which, as the cause gradually extended from Dublin westward to the midland counties, then southward to the county of Cork, and then northward to Ulster, he travelled south and north, west and east, on rough roads and in all kinds of weather, proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation to Protestants and Catholics, Episcopalians and Presbyterians, until there was hardly a town or village in the country that he had not visited. Generally he rode on horseback, and when unable to do so used a chaise, in which he had his misadventures. At a ferry it fell overboard, and was with difficulty recovered; at another place it took five hours to drag it less than a dozen miles; and at a third it was disabled by the breaking of an axle-tree; while more than once it was in danger of being dashed to pieces by furious mobs, to say nothing of the occupant having to be carried on the shoulders of some of the peasantry, owing to the wretched state of the roads.

At rare intervals the devoted evangelist was entertained in the stately mansions of the nobility and gentry, but frequently in the humble dwellings of artisans and the thatched cottages of small farmers, and not seldom in little hovels, with walls, floor, and ceiling of mud; while on arriving at midnight at one place where he wished to sleep, the woman who kept the inn not only refused him admittance, but let loose four dogs upon him. At Monaghan he was nearly arrested as a person of questionable designs.

When Wesley began his work in Ireland, all places of worship were closed against him; so that he had to avail himself of one or two disused

chapels or halls in the metropolis for the more select services, and for the more public meetings to take his stand in Oxmantown Green and other places of public resort in the open air. Then, as the work branched out into the provinces, he preached in the streets, the bowling-greens, the market-houses, the town-halls, and, at least on one occasion, in a stable. At length, in 1752, the first Methodist chapel erected in the country was opened. It was in Whitefriars Street, Dublin, and proved for nearly a century the Cathedral of Methodism in Ireland. It is described by Wesley as nearly of the same size and form as that in Newcastle, but having deeper galleries on three sides, and thus providing accommodation for a large number of people. This chapel was followed by one on Hammond's Marsh, Cork, and that by others throughout the country, some of them neat and comfortable, most of them humble structures in out-of-the-way places, and a few "built in the taste of the country," with mud walls and thatched roof. But towards the close of Wesley's career he was permitted to preach in a few Episcopal churches and Presbyterian meeting-houses.

As might be expected, the devoted evangelist was exposed to serious opposition and misrepresentation. A rector in the south said of him that he was a Jesuit, and that he and his brother Charles had been expelled from the University of Oxford; but a priest in Dublin, with a sounder judgment, exclaimed aloud, when a hearer cried out, "Ay, he is a Jesuit, that's plain," "No, he is not. I would to God he was!" Although not exposed to physical violence to the same extent as many of the early itinerants, Wesley was not preserved from imminent peril, as when in Cork, in 1750, he made his way amid a shower of missiles through a brutish mob; but in general he escaped personal injury through his own discretion or the assistance of others. Thus, during the terrible riots in Cork, having been informed that it was impossible to preach in the city then, he resolved to ride straight through it, according to his custom when apprehensive of danger, before the hour at which he was expected, and thus the mob had not time to assemble until he was beyond their reach. And again in Carrick-on-Shannon, when a magistrate, followed by a mob, came to silence him, he quietly removed the congregation to the garden at the rear of the house; and when the justice of the peace and his minions followed him, and shouted, "You shall not preach here," he,

with provoking coolness, replied, "I do not intend it, for I have preached already." So the representative of law and order vented his rage on Wesley's hat, which he beat and kicked most valiantly; but a gentleman rescued it out of his hands, and the evangelist rode quietly out of the town. In Cork, at the close of a service, the Highlanders present took their position in front and rear of the preacher, and thus protected him from an infuriated mob. At Bandon a butcher, who was not a Methodist, with a blow on the head such as he would have given an ox, felled a disturber of the congregation. "So," says Wesley, "I quietly finished my discourse." At Swanlinbar he had hardly announced his text when a poor Romanist began to blow a horn; but a gentleman present snatched the instrument, and, without ceremony, knocked its possessor down. And at Waterford, where Wesley was attacked by a Cotholic mob and two or three who endeavoured to quiet the rowdies were dashed to the ground, some gentlemen rushed into their midst, seized the ringleader, and delivered him into custody, while the ex-mayor conducted the venerable preacher in safety to the house where he was stopping.

At Lisburn Wesley was introduced to Mrs. Gayer; and he, not knowing that her husband—clerk of the Irish House of Lords—had a strong prejudice against Methodism, offered to call and see her. On the day following he went out to Derryaghy, met Mr. Gayer in the avenue leading to his house, and inquired if Mrs. Gayer lived there. Mr. Gayer replied, "Yes, she is my wife," and, entering into conversation with the stranger, was so much impressed with his culture and gentlemanly deportment that he invited him to dinner. Thus prejudices were completely removed, and arrangements made for regular services in the house.

It was here, as Wesley lay seriously ill and many were apprehensive of a fatal issue, one of his preachers with a few friends prayed earnestly that God would graciously prolong the valuable life of His servant, and, as in the case of Hezekiah, add to his days fifteen years. Mrs. Gayer suddenly rose from her knees, and exclaimed, "The prayer is granted!" Soon afterwards the patient recovered, and, it is worthy of notice, survived fifteen years and eight months.

In the midst of these journeys and labours Wesley found time to write numerous pamphlets and letters defending himself and his

followers from the slanderous charges preferred against them and calculated to remove the bitter prejudice and unreasonable views entertained in regard to him and the Methodists.

On Sunday July 12, 1789, Wesley preached his farewell sermon to a crowded and deeply-affected congregation in Whitefriars Street Chapel. Having administered the Lord's Supper, he dined in the house of a friend, commended the family to the protection and blessing of God, and proceeded to the packet, accompanied by several members of the household and other friends who were joined by a multitude at the quay. The scene here was most touching as Wesley bade adieu to Ireland. Before going on board he gave out a hymn, and the crowd joined him in singing. He then knelt down, and asked God to bless them and their families, the Church, and especially Ireland. Shaking of hands followed, many wept, and not a few fell on the old man's neck and kissed him. He went on deck, the vessel moved, and then, with hands still lifted in prayer, the winds of heaven wafted him from an island which he dearly loved, and the Irish Methodists "saw his face no more."

Let us pause here, and look at the noble work this honoured servant of God was the agent in accomplishing in this country. At an early period several leaders in London expressed their regret that he should spend so much of his time on this side of the Channel, and he replied, "Have patience, and Ireland will repay you." These words were prophetic, and were blessedly and gloriously fulfilled long before he ended his last visit to the country. Only forty-two years had elapsed since the introduction of Methodism, and, notwithstanding fierce and persistent opposition, it had made amazing strides. Although members of all the Churches had alike opposed its progress, and endeavoured to crush its very existence, the proclamation of the Gospel had been made by its agency through the length and breadth of the land, and everywhere had been attended with signal success, while the face of whole towns and districts of country had been completely changed for the better. The members of the Society multiplied, and its sphere of labour extended, until its chapels numbered eighty-two, its preachers sixty-five, and its members upwards of fourteen thousand. From amongst the converts the Lord raised up a large staff of earnest, devoted Christian workers, including not less

than one hundred and thirty-seven who had entered the active work of the itinerancy. Some of these were princes in Israel, men who occupied a foremost place among the ministers of their day, such as Thomas Walsh, William Thompson, Henry Moore, Adam Clarke, Walter Griffith, and William Myles.

The influence of Wesley, however, extended far beyond the pale of Methodism. The Christian Churches of the land began to awake and shake themselves from the dust. When he entered on his mission, he was regarded with suspicion, reproaches were heaped upon him, and persecution followed him. But he was permitted to live to vindicate the purity of his motives, and to win the esteem of the more generous of his adversaries. In 1783 he writes: "I am become, I know not how, an honourable man. The scandal of the cross is ceased, and all the kingdom, rich and poor, Romanist and Protestant, behave with courtesy—nay, and seeming good-will! It seems as if I had well-nigh finished my course, and our blessed Lord was giving me an honourable discharge." Many of the ministers and members of the Protestant Churches saw that through the influence of Methodism their membership was increased their spiritual life deepened, and their ministerial ranks here and there filled with men of piety, zeal, and Christian worth. Nor were the fruits of Wesley's labour confined to this country. The good seed was carried hence to France, Newfoundland, the West Indies, the Canadas, and the United States of America; and a glorious spiritual harvest was reaped in these countries the extent of which eternity alone will reveal.

CHARLES H. CROOKSHANK.

# John Wesley in the North Riding.

FAR away in the North Riding of Yorkshire, beyond the nervous haste of cities, and amid the pure air of everlasting hills, there lies a group of villages which were once intimately connected with the northern travels of John Wesley. Between Newcastle and Northallerton he went to and fro, spending his time in wild villages nestling in the valleys below fox-haunted woods, or meeting purple moors on the side of great fells. It was in these villages that he heard many a quaint story of weird happenings and superstitions, gained the friendship of many a sturdy dalesman, and of honourable women not a few. The moorland country around Thirsk and Northallerton has not changed much in aspect since the days of John Wesley. There are still corners in Cleveland, where wild legends prevail and primitive characters abound. Below, in the valley, a railroad runs like an iron thread, but its modernising influence has not climbed up into the hills, for their villages are many miles away. Bordering the heather and bracken which cover the Hambledon Hills lies the old village of Osmotherley. It clusters round its grey-towered church, and scatters its homesteads over the open moor or on the wayward winding wayside that trends towards the valley. Northallerton is nine miles away, and is reached by a steep road over hill and dale, for Osmotherley is in the heart of the moors.

Two or three miles away the famous hanging stone stands out against the horizon. On the moors above is situated the tiny "Chequers Inn," where the peat fire has never been out, probably, since the days when John Wesley's horse carried him through Summer's bracken and Winter's snow.

Though he visited the neighbouring villages of Potto, Hutton Rudby, and the little town of Yarm, John Wesley generally seemed to

find most to interest and encourage him in the moorland village of Osmotherley. It has stood under the shadow of the hill Rueberry since Saxon days, and its name appears in Domesday Book as Osmunderlac. Its derivation is very apparent—the "lac" meaning field or land of Osmund—but a local legend gives it a more fanciful origin. It is said that when King Oswald's son was born wise men were summoned to Court to foretell his destiny. They declared that he would be drowned before attaining a certain age. To prevent this his mother retired with him to the lonely country of Cleveland, far away from any water, and, by constant watching, tried to avert his destiny.

But it was in vain. A fountain of water gushed out of the rock, and the child was drowned in it. He was buried in the neighbouring church, and a short time afterwards his mother died of grief. She was buried by his side, and from this, says tradition, came the name of the village—Os-by-his-mother-lay, which has been abbreviated to Osmotherley.

Cleveland was once a centre of Romanism in the days when many people in the North Riding were ardent Jacobites. Luke Tyerman was a native of Osmotherley, near which his forefathers had made their home. His grandmother who lived six miles away was a Papist; for many years she walked over the trackless moors every Sunday morning to hear Latin prayers read in Osmotherley Catholic Chapel.

Wesley was first invited to the village by a recluse named Adams, who had heard of the Methodists, and whose curiosity was aroused. It is possible that this man was himself an ex-priest who was obliged, for safety, to keep very near home, but his history only rests upon tradition.

On Easter Monday, 1745, John Wesley arrived at Northallerton in the evening, and preached at the inn. Among his hearers were several of the inhabitants of Osmotherley, including Adams and Elizabeth Tyerman, a Quakeress. When the service was over they invited Wesley to go home with them, and, although he had ridden sixty miles, and preached thrice that day, he willingly consented. It is not difficult to imagine that small group of riders making their way back again to the moorland village in the darkness of night. It is only during this present spring of 1903 that men are at work levelling some of the steeper hills and rounding the sharpest corners of that old hillside road. The

same fields border it, the identical elms which raised their branches into the night above Wesley's head are only broader and higher. There are no modern villas beside the sunburnt homesteads. There is no change in the face of the everlasting hills.

It was ten o'clock when they reached Osmotherley, and darkness reigned in the moorland village. But Wesley's friends went round to farm and cottage, awakening the villagers and bidding them leave their beds to hear the great preacher. This they did, and many remained up all night, that they might not miss his sermon at five o'clock the next morning.

Before he left Elizabeth Tyerman was baptized. In Luke Tyerman's childhood an old Methodist named Jenny Meek lived at Osmotherley. She was a very aged woman, and remembered John Wesley perfectly. She had known him well, and would relate to the little boy long stories of those old days. She recollected the baptism which, she said, took place, not in the Romanist chapel where Wesley is said to have preached, but in an adjoining house.

Soon after this a society was formed at Osmotherley, the original society book of which, dating from 1750, is still in existence. Four years later a chapel was built. It was a very plain structure, and up to the year 1865 was used uninterruptedly as a Methodist chapel. With the exception of Coleford, in Somersetshire, it was the oldest in the world which was continuously used as such.

Though seven miles from the direct road between Newcastle and London, Osmotherley became one of Wesley's favourite haunts. He loved the old-world village that bordered the moors, and visited it at least sixteen times. Gradually he included neighbouring villages in his visits, until he was known and welcomed throughout that far corner of the North Riding of Yorkshire.

In 1745 great excitement prevailed in the North of England, for the coming of Charles Edward, the Young Pretender, was expected. About this time Wesley was suspected in some quarters of a leaning towards Papacy, and during the preparations for an expected siege at Newcastle he did all he could to aid the Mayor of Newcastle, and to strengthen the surrounding villages against the Pretender's appearance.

About a mile below Osmotherley, amid the dense ferns and greenwood of Arncliffe Woods, there are still standing the ruins of an

ancient Carthusian Priory. It is possible to distinguish the carving and delicate tracery of its tower, and to mark the form of its ruined cells, where white-robed monks once lived their life of solitude under the great hills. Time has only added a little more ivy to the quiet, grey ruins, and another shade of density to its woods, since the early autumn day in 1745 when John Wesley visited them. As he stood in the grassy quadrangle words came to his lips which were then more just than popular. Had his enemies heard them they would undoubtedly have been used against him. "Who knows but some of the poor, superstitious monks who once served God here according to the light they had may meet us by-and-by in that House of God not made with hands eternal in the heavens."

In March, 1747, John Wesley preached in Osmotherley Church. He reached the village on Sunday morning, just as the clergyman was walking to church, and offered to help him in the morning service. A hearty assent was given, and large congregations filled the church both morning and afternoon. Mr. D——, the clergyman, invited Wesley to preach in his church whenever he passed that way, and regretted that his house was too far away for him to offer its hospitality to his guest.

On Wesley's return from Newcastle during the same spring he visited Osmotherley again, but found that persecution had reached even its hill country seclusion. The Vicar had been vehemently attacked for giving up his church to Wesley, so this time the service was held in the churchyard, and John Wesley preached from a tombstone. In his Journal he says: "How wisely does God order all things! Some will not hear even the Word of God out of a church. For the sake of these we are often permitted to preach in a church. Others will not hear it in a church. For their sakes we are often compelled to preach in the highways."

On this occasion John Nelson had travelled from Birstal to Osmotherley to meet Wesley, and had met with great misadventure by the way. At Heworth Green, outside York, he had been attacked by a company of "gentlemen," who came out from the city. He was felled to the ground by a huge brick, and was only rescued by an honest citizen, who took him into his house near the city gates. After a surgeon had dressed his wound he rode quietly to Acomb, but the same mob followed him there in a coach, and belaboured him until he was left on the

ground for dead. But, after being carried into a house, and having a night's rest, he was able to ride to Osmotherley the next day.

On the 16th of August John Wesley left Newcastle, accompanied by Grace Murray, and preached that day at Stockton, Yarm, and in the same evening at Osmotherley, in the village street, amid torrents of rain.

In 1752 he travelled through the North, accompanied by his wife, and on this occasion a curious incident took place at Osmotherley. After the evening service he was asked to visit a woman who was a scoffer at all religion. He found her "either raving mad or possessed of the devil." She affirmed that the devil had appeared to her the day before and grievously tormented her. After Wesley had prayed with her she fell asleep, and awoke in the morning with a calm mind. Osmotherley tradition says that the woman's name was Elizabeth Whitfield. The next day Wesley paid his first visit to Stokesley. A mob awaited him there, but, as he did not commence his service with a hymn, his enemies missed their signal and did not gather together against him.

In the year 1755 a strange phenomenon occurred in the North Riding, at Whiston Cliffs, about two miles from Sutton, five from Thirsk, and seven from Osmotherley. The great range of hills which Osmotherley borders are known by the name of Black Hambledon. On the Tuesday before Easter a tremendous noise was heard in this direction, and a vast ridge of rock was split asunder, amid a noise like rolling thunder. Next day a huge boulder, fifteen yards high, was torn from the rock and hurled into the valley, the ground shook, great stones were thrown up, fissures made in the mountain, and giant trees torn up by the roots. The cliff from which the surface was torn was of a bright, light colour, and could be plainly seen for many miles; rocks and trees were even removed by some unknown force to a considerable distance. John Wesley was greatly interested in this phenomenon, and ascribed its power to the supernatural, in which he was ever keenly interested. He maintained that it was impossible for such an upheaval to be caused by fire, water, or compressed air, but accounted for it as intervention by God, to warn the gentry and nobility who flocked to the spot every year for the training and practising of horses. He wrote an account of the occurrence, which was published in several magazines of the day, and provoked a contradictory correspondence from a contributor to the

"Gentleman's Magazine," who declared that no such disturbance had taken place. This gives us a realistic glimpse of the England of that day. There were no crowds of tourists to the place where such a remarkable event had taken place. No excursions were running to the nearest station. No newspaper reporters appeared like lightning upon the ground, armed with shorthand notebooks. After their first terror had passed the people accepted Wesley's dictum with the finality of old-time conclusion, and he, a passing visitor, made the story known to the outside world.

In July, 1757, Wesley preached at Yarm and Osmotherley on his way south. At Yarm his church was the market-place. "Many gentry were present, and all serious." At Osmotherley on this occasion it is recorded in their old account book that the society was put to the expense of half-a-crown. Wesley did not apparently visit the North Riding again until 1761, when he found that service had been carried on regularly for three years in a hayloft. In 1763 this was superseded by a chapel, and Yarm became the head of a circuit, which comprised Stockton, Hartlepool, Guisborough, Stokesley, Whitby, Thirsk, Ripon, Northallerton, and thirty other places. The following are some of the entries in Yarm society book for 1761 :—

"Mr. Fughll's and Mr. Wesley's charges, 13s. 8d. Paid the lad for dressing the horse, 1s. 6d. Half a pound of lickrish for Mr. Meggitt's horse, 6d. A pound and a half of candles, 9d. Preacher's watch mending, 2s. 6d. Lousing a letter, 4d."

Wesley's home at Yarm was always with a certain Mr. Merryweather. An old Methodist who lived in the town, and who well remembered him, has thus described his appearance on his arrival for a visit :—"His cassock, his black silk stockings, his large silver buckles, and his lumbering old carriage, with a bookcase inside it." She and another little girl, while playing, ran the pole of the carriage through Mr. Merryweather's window, for which they received a scolding. She further stated that on one occasion, when Mr. Merryweather's servant entered Wesley's room, she found his coachman rolling himself vigorously up and down the feather bed, because Wesley would not sleep on it until it was made as hard as possible.

During this round of visits John Wesley went to Hutton Rudby, a very ancient village, not many miles from Osmotherley. It was built

in the days when architects had not ceased to consider the beauty of spaces, and the houses stand far back from a tree-shaded green.

It is not generally known that Cardinal Wolsey was once Rector of the parish, and that a monastery stood in the meadows by the river. In the days of Wesley it was, like many a North Riding village, the centre of a great linen trade, carried on in the cottages, on hand looms. When two or three webs were finished they were placed on each side of a pony's back, and carried over the steep, winding roads, through the quiet country, to Newcastle.

Wesley visited this village several times, and also Potto, situated about a mile away. There his chief supporter was a woman of the name of Mrs. Moon, whose conversion had been brought about by an old woman from Birstal, who came to Mr. Moon's house to card his sheep "doddings," and to spin them into linsey woolsey yarn.

During Wesley's visit to Yarm in 1763 a heavy shower of rain came on at the commencement of his open-air service. He prayed, and in two or three minutes it ceased. He says: "Incidents of this kind I have seen abundance of times, and particularly in this journey; and they are nothing strange to them who seriously believe 'the very hairs of your head are all numbered.'"

In 1784 Wesley mentions in his Journal that he "preached once more to his old friends at Osmotherley," but his final visit to the North Riding took place in 1790, shortly before his death, when he passed on to Whitby, where he preached in a new chapel, "one of the most beautiful in Great Britain," finely situated on the steep side of the mountain. The society here pleased him particularly. He called it a "pattern to all England. They despise all ornaments but good works, together with a meek and quiet spirit. I did not see a ruffle, no, nor a fashionable cap, among them, though many of them are in easy circumstances."

So ended John Wesley's visits to the wild moorland country of the North Riding of Yorkshire, where stories of his deeds and words are still traditions in many a hillside hamlet.

FLORENCE BONE.

# John Wesley's Place in History.*

BY way of introduction, let me say that, when Methodism began to make itself felt (1750 to 1760), England was in a sad plight. At home the people were starving and rioting, and it is not without significance that when, during the bread riots at Bristol, some were killed and others imprisoned, the prisoners sent for John Wesley, who prayed with them and preached to them.

In 1756 the "Seven Years' War" began, and poverty-stricken, riotous England had to brace herself for conflict with other nations. France, Russia, Sweden, and Saxony were in alliance against her. Wesley fasted and prayed on the day set apart, but being in some respects truly Cromwellian in character, he also wrote offering to raise a hundred volunteers for the King's service.

In these two incidents—the visit to the rioters who had been thrown into the Bridewell, and his action in the matter of the King's Army—we get an intimation of the interest Wesley took in political affairs at home and abroad.

I wish in the following paragraphs to present the views of the historian, who has, perhaps, been truest to the genius of the English People, and has described for us the gradual development of the nation itself, as distinguished from a mere recital, with moralisings thereon, of the doings of kings, governments and armies. In doing this I shall not be able to keep strictly to the text of the Larger History, and yet so many selections, eliminations, and explanatory alterations will be necessary, in order to cram the historian's meaning into as brief a space as possible, that we must dispense, except for emphatic and precise quotation, with the usual inverted commas. Broadly speaking, as can be verified by a reference to the pages in-

* A review of John Richard Green's Tribute.

dicated, the phrasing will be John Richard Green's, with the necessary connecting sentences or deletions.

Writing of the time above mentioned, Green says: "The Church was now sinking into political insignificance. In heart, indeed, England remained religious. In the middle class the old Puritan spirit lived on unchanged, and it was from this class that a religious revival burst forth which changed after a time the whole tone of English society."

He goes on to show that for fifty years before this outburst there was open revolt against religion and against Churches among the higher and poorer classes. In the higher circles "every one laughs," said Montesquieu, on his visit to England, "if one talks of religion."

The prominent statesmen were unbelievers in any form of Christianity, and were distinguished for the grossness and immorality of their lives. Drunkenness and foul talk were thought no discredit to the Prime Minister.

Of the poor our historian says: "They were ignorant and brutal to a degree. The population had increased, but this had been met by no effort for religious or educational improvement. No new parishes had been created. Hardly a single new church had been built. Schools there were none, except the Grammar Schools of Edward and Elizabeth. The people were pauperised." Of a far later time Hannah More wrote: "We saw only one Bible in the parish of Cheddar, and that was used to prop a flower-pot."

The criminal class became more ungovernable in face of ruthless laws, which only testified to the terror of society, laws which made it a capital crime to cut down a cherry tree and which strung up twenty young thieves of a morning in front of Newgate Prison.

Green goes on to say that the drink-shops of London invited every passer-by to get drunk for a penny, or dead drunk for twopence. He attributed much of this to the sloth of the clergy, and quotes Bishop Burnet, who branded the English clergy of the time as the most lifeless in Europe. For all this, and much more to the same effect, see Vol. IV., Larger History, pages 120-1-2.

Some twenty pages further on, after showing that a new public spirit was beginning to show itself in the nation, Green says: "Rant about political corruption among the ministers of the Crown would have fallen

flat but for one fact. That fact was that new moral forces, a new sense of social virtue, a new sense of religion was astir in the minds of Englishmen. It showed itself markedly in a religious revival which dates from the later years of Walpole's Ministry; and which began in a small knot of Oxford students, whose revolt against the religious deadness of the times expressed itself in ascetic observances, an enthusiastic devotion, and a methodical regularity of life which gained for them the nickname of 'Methodists.' Three figures detached themselves from the group as soon as, on its transference to London in 1738, it attracted public attention by the fervour and even extravagance of its piety, and each found his special work in the task to which the instinct of the new movement led it from the first, that of carrying religion and morality to the dense masses concentrated in the towns around the mines of Cornwall and the North. Their voice was soon heard in the wildest and most barbarous corners of the land, among the bleak moors of Northumberland, or in the dens of London, or in the Cornish galleries, where the miner, in the pauses of his labour, listens to the sobbing of the sea. Charles Wesley came to add sweetness to this sudden and startling light. He was the sweet singer of the movement. His hymns expressed the fiery conviction of its converts in lines so chaste and beautiful that its more extravagant features disappeared. A new musical impulse was given to the people which gradually changed the face of public devotion throughout England. But it was his elder brother, John Wesley, who embodied in himself not this or that side of the new movement, but the movement itself. He possessed an indefatigable industry, a cool judgment, a command over others, a faculty of organisation, a singular union of patience and moderation, with an imperious ambition, which marked him as a ruler of men. He had learning. He had skill in writing. His life almost covered the century. He was born in 1703, and lived on until 1791. The Methodist body had passed through every phase of its history before he sank into his grave, at the age of eighty-eight."

Green indicates the elasticity and breadth of Wesley's mind by the fact that he broke away from the narrowness and intolerance of a Churchmanship so rigid that in his earlier days the Bishops had been obliged to rebuke him. He broke with the Moravians, because they endangered it by their contempt of religious forms. He broke from White-

field on field preaching, and, later, on account of his extravagant Calvinism. Yet he became the greatest and most unwearied of field preachers, and, when once driven to employ lay helpers, he made their work a new and attractive feature in his system. The great body which he founded numbered a hundred thousand members at his death, and now counts its members in England and America by millions. But, says Green—and this is significant of much, coming from the pen of a Churchman—the Methodists themselves were the least result of the Methodist Revival. Its action upon the Church broke the lethargy of the clergy, and the Evangelical movement made the fox-hunting parson and the absentee rector at last impossible. In the nation at large appeared a new moral enthusiasm, whose power was seen in the disappearance of the profligacy of the upper classes and the foulness which had infested literature ever since the Restoration. A new philanthropy reformed our prisons, infused clemency and wisdom into our penal laws, abolished the slave trade, and gave the first impulse to popular education. See Vol. IV., pages 145-6-7-8-9.

After some fifty pages, in which, towards the end, he depicts a truly degraded state of affairs, Green harks back to Methodism, to show its regenerating influence.

He shows that purchase had become more and more the means of entering Parliament. So far was this the case that even Pitt himself, at the height of his popularity, could hardly find a seat in it. Seats were bought and sold in the open market at a price which rose to four thousand pounds. "The House of Commons did not represent the people of Great Britain," said Burke. "It represented nominal boroughs, ruined and exterminated towns, aristocratic families, wealthy individuals, and foreign potentates." Walpole and Newcastle had made bribery and borough-jobbing the base of their power. But, says Green, bribery and borough-jobbing were every day becoming more offensive to the nation, and, mark this, he gives his view of the reason in the following words: "A new moral consciousness, in the movement of the Wesleys, was diffusing itself through England; and behind this moral consciousness came a general advance in the national intelligence, which could not fail to tell vigorously on politics."

After another seventy pages, he refers to the "deeper change"

in the religious temper of the community, and says: "It dates from the Wesleys." When Green has anything good or hopeful to say of the eighteenth century, he cannot get away from the Wesleys. He again asserts that the Methodists themselves were the least result of the Methodist revival. "A yet nobler result was the steady attempt which has never ceased from that day to this, to remedy the guilt, the ignorance, the physical suffering, the social degradation of the ignorant poor." He mentions as the indirect result of the work of the Wesleys the work of Robert Raikes as the founder of Sunday Schools, the work of Hannah More for the agricultural labourer, the work of Howard relating to prisons, and the work of Wilberforce as the liberator of slaves. He continues: "Time was to show how wide were the issues to which this religious development and the sentiment of humanity which it generated were to lead." He forthwith proceeds, page 278, to enumerate industrial enterprises which received in turn the new impetus, and mentions, as an indirect result of the religious movement, the work of Brindley, the Duke of Bridgewater, Watt, Hargreaves, and Arkwright.

But perhaps the highest tribute Green pays to Wesley and early Methodism is when he supports other historians in the opinion that Methodism saved this country from the river of blood and ruin which devastated France during the Revolution. He says of France, after showing that at first there was much sympathy with the Revolution: "The anarchy of the country, the want of political sense in the Assembly, the paltry declamation of its clubs, the exaggerated sentiment, the universal suspicion, the suspension of every security for personal freedom, the arrests, the murders, the overthrow of the Church, the ruin of the Crown, were watched with an ever-growing severity by the English nation, whose chief instinct was one of order, whose bent was to practical politics, whose temper was sober and trustful, whose passionate love of personal liberty was only equalled by its passionate abhorrence of bloodshed in civil strife, and whose ecclesiastical and political institutions had but newly been endeared to it by a fresh revival of religious feeling." Page 306.

We have no space to quote Green's eloquent passage (page 270), in which he seems to weld for all time the two great English-speaking peoples. Suffice it to say that several of the foremost men among

the American people, both in the Senate and on "the field," have been Methodists, representatives of a Methodist Church which numbers its ministers by tens of thousands, and its adherents by many millions. In this connection we cannot forget Presidents Grant and M'Kinley, nor the blind Methodist preacher, recently deceased, whose extempore prayer in the American Senate House, when England and America were on the verge of war, kindled afresh the feeling of brotherhood and set many senators sobbing as they remembered what ties of kinship made the two peoples one, though separated by three thousand miles of ocean.

EDWARD H. JACKSON.

# Two-Hundredth Anniversary of Wesley's Birth.

## By PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT.

I AM glad America has a peculiar proprietary claim on Wesley's memory, for it is on our continent that the Methodist Church has received its greatest development. In the days of our colonial life Methodism was not, on the whole, a great factor in the religious and social life of the people. The Congregationalists were supreme throughout most of New England; the Episcopalians on the seaboard from New York southward; while the Presbyterian congregations were most numerous along what was then the entire western frontier; and the Quaker, Catholic, and Dutch Reformed Churches each had developments in special places. The great growth of the Methodist Church, like the great growth of the Baptist Church, began at about the time of the Revolutionary War. To-day my theme is purely Methodism.

Since the days of the Revolution not only has the Methodist Church increased greatly in the old communities of the thirteen original States, but it has played a peculiar and prominent part in the pioneer growth of our country, and has, in consequence, assumed a position of immense importance throughout the vast region west of the Alleghenies which has been added to our nation since the days when the Continental Congress first met.

For a century after the Declaration of Independence the greatest work of our people, with the exception only of the work of self-preservation under Lincoln, was the work of the pioneers as they took

possession of this continent. During that century we pushed westward from the Alleghenies to the Pacific, southward to the Gulf and the Rio Grande, and also took possession of Alaska. The work of advancing our boundary, of pushing the frontier across forest and desert and mountain chain, was the great typical work of our nation; and the men who did it—the frontiersmen, the pioneers, the backwoodsmen, plainsmen, mountain men—formed a class by themselves. It was an iron task, which none but men of iron soul and iron body could do. The men who carried it to a successful conclusion had characters strong alike for good and for evil. Their rugged natures made them powers who served light or darkness with fierce intensity; and together with heroic traits they had those evil and dreadful tendencies which are apt to be found in characters of heroic possibilities. Such men make the most efficient servants of the Lord if their abounding vitality and energy are directed aright; and if misdirected their influence is equally potent against the cause of Christianity and true civilisation. In the hard and cruel life of the border, with its grim struggle against the forbidding forces of wild nature and wilder men, there was much to pull the frontiersman down. If left to himself, without moral teaching and moral guidance, without any of the influences that tend toward the uplifting of man and the subduing of the brute within him, sad would have been his, and therefore our, fate. From this fate we have been largely rescued by the fact that, together with the rest of the pioneers went the pioneer preachers; and all honour be given to the Methodists for the great proportion of these pioneer preachers whom they furnished.

These preachers were of the stamp of old Peter Cartwright—men who suffered and overcame every hardship in common with their flock, and who in addition tamed the wild and fierce spirits of their fellow-pioneers. It was not a task that could have been accomplished by men desirous to live in the soft places of the earth and to walk easily on life's journey. They had to possess the spirit of the martyrs; but not of martyrs who could merely suffer, not of martyrs who could oppose only passive endurance to wrong. The pioneer preachers warred against the forces of spiritual evil with the same fiery zeal and energy that they and their fellows showed in the conquest of the rugged continent. They had in them the heroic spirit, the spirit that

scorns ease if it must be purchased by failure to do duty, the spirit that courts risk and a life of hard endeavour if the goal to be reached is really worth attaining. Great is our debt to these men, and scant the patience we need show toward their critics. At times they seemed hard and narrow to those whose training and surroundings had saved them from similar temptations; and they have been criticised, as all men, whether missionaries, soldiers, explorers, or frontier settlers, are criticised when they go forth to do the rough work that must inevitably be done by those who act as the first harbingers, the first heralds, of civilisation in the world's dark places. It is easy for those who stay at home in comfort, who never have to see humanity in the raw, or to strive against the dreadful naked forces which appear clothed, hidden, and subdued in civilised life—it is easy for such to criticise the men who, in rough fashion, and amid grim surroundings, make ready the way for the higher life that is to come afterward; but let us all remember that the untempted and the effortless should be cautious in passing too heavy judgment upon their brethren who may show hardness, who may be guilty of shortcomings, but who nevertheless do the great deeds by which mankind advances. These pioneers of Methodism had the strong, militant virtues which go to the accomplishment of such great deeds. Now and then they betrayed the shortcomings natural to men of their type; but their shortcomings seem small indeed when we place beside them the magnitude of the work they achieved.

And now, friends, in celebrating the wonderful growth of Methodism, in rejoicing at the good it has done to the country and to mankind, I need hardly ask a body like this to remember that the greatness of the fathers becomes to the children a shameful thing if they use it only as an excuse for inaction instead of as a spur to efforts for noble aims. I speak to you not only as Methodists—I speak to you as American citizens. The pioneer days are over. We now all of us form parts of a great civilised nation, with a complex industrial and social life, and infinite possibilities both for good and for evil. The instruments with which, and the surroundings in which, we work have changed immeasurably from what they were in the days when the rough backwoods preachers ministered to the moral and spiritual needs of their rough backwoods congregations. But if we are to succeed, the spirit

in which we do our work must be the same as the spirit in which they did theirs. These men drove forward, and fought their way upward, to success, because their sense of duty was in their hearts, in the very marrow of their bones. It was not with them something to be considered as a mere adjunct to their theology, standing separate and apart from their daily life. They had it with them week days as well as Sundays. They did not divorce the spiritual from the secular. They did not have one kind of conscience for one side of their lives and another for another.

Well, if we are to succeed as a nation we must have the same spirit in us. We must be absolutely practical, of course, and must face facts as they are. The pioneer preachers of Methodism could not have held their own for a fortnight if they had not shown an intense practicality of spirit, if they had not possessed the broadest and deepest sympathy for, and understanding of, their fellow-men. But in addition to the hard, practical common sense needed by each of us in life, we must have a lift towards lofty things or we shall be lost individually, and collectively as a nation. Life is not easy, and least of all is it easy for either the man or the nation that aspires to do great deeds. In the century opening the play of the infinitely far-reaching forces and tendencies which go to make up our social system bids fair to be even fiercer in its activity than in the century which has just closed. If during this century the men of high and fine moral sense show themselves weaklings; if they possess only that cloistered virtue which shrinks shuddering from contact with the raw facts of actual life; if they dare not go down into the hurly-burly where the men of might contend for the mastery; if they stand aside from the pressure and conflict; then as surely as the sun rises and sets all of our great material progress, all the multiplication of the physical agencies which tend for our comfort and enjoyment, will go for naught, and our civilisation will become a brutal sham and mockery. If we are to do as I believe we shall and will do, if we are to advance in broad humanity, in kindliness, in the spirit of brotherhood, exactly as we advance in our conquest over the hidden forces of nature, it must be by developing strength in virtue and virtue in strength, by breeding and training men who shall be both good and strong, both gentle and valiant—men who scorn wrong-doing and who, at the same time, have both the courage and the strength to strive mightily for the right.

Wesley said he did not intend to leave all the good tunes to the service of the devil. He accomplished so much for mankind because he also refused to leave the stronger, manlier qualities to be availed of only in the interest of evil. The Church he founded has throughout its career been a Church for the poor as well as for the rich, and has known no distinction of persons. It has been a Church whose members, if true to the teachings of its founder, have sought for no greater privilege than to spend and be spent in the interest of the higher life, who have prided themselves, not on shirking rough duty, but on undertaking it and carrying it to a successful conclusion.

I come here to-night to greet you and to pay my tribute to your past because you have deserved well of mankind, because you have striven with strength and courage to bring nearer the day when peace and justice shall obtain among the peoples of the earth.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT.

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